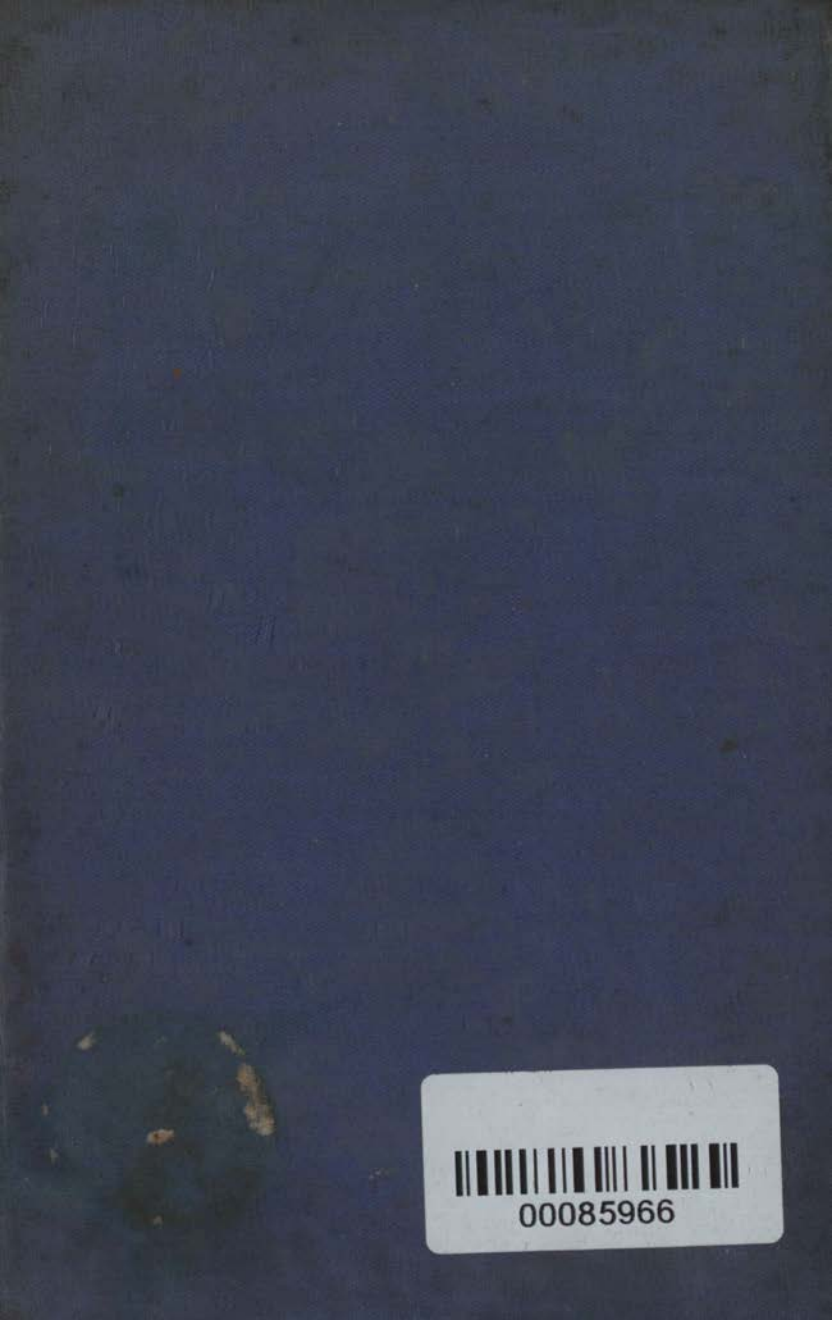
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Frivolous Peeps at India

Ethel Kelly
1911

FRIVOLOUS PEEPS AT INDIA

BY

ETHEL KELLY

GEORGE ROBERTSON AND COMPANY
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MELBOURNE, SYDNEY, ADELAIDE
AND BRISBANE.

DEDICATION

ON leaving for India all my friends desired me to write them from each place I visited; this is an impossibility if one is to have the joy, not the work, of living in a brief winter tour. The thought then occurred to me to make a collection of a series of letters written to different people, but open to all to read who care to buy the book. I have endeavoured to see new things in old places, and to record the familiar aspects of each town for the benefit of those who I know will neither see India with their own eyes, nor read any of the exhaustive studies already published on this fascinating country. This little book does not pretend to enlighten or improve the mind thirsting for archaeological or geographical knowledge, but to give a truthful photograph of social India as I saw it. To do this, names must appear, but I trust I am not like the early amateur photographers who "did justice without mercy." The names set down are only inserted as milestones of kindness, and I trust I may be forgiven by the owners for the personal tone they infuse.

ETHEL KELLY

Commissioner's House,
LUCKNOW.
February 5th, 1911.

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COLOMBO.

THE GRAND ORIENTAL HOTEL,
COLOMBO, CEYLON.

Daddy dear,—

The sun shone hotly as the "Malwa" rounded the course necessary to enter the open space between the break-water wall, constructed to protect the Harbor from the monsoonal storms. Even now, November 9th, the sea dashed high against it, sending sheets of surf well over. The natives in dug out catamarans, their brown bodies only covered by a loin cloth, chattered like monkeys, and the moment the ship came up to her anchorage, dozens of quaintly dressed Tamals came aboard, selling native lace, an industry taught their women by the French Nuns. Others had post-cards, or the net scarves of Port Said, with a pattern welted in of silver; but all with their heads quaintly dressed or ornamented.

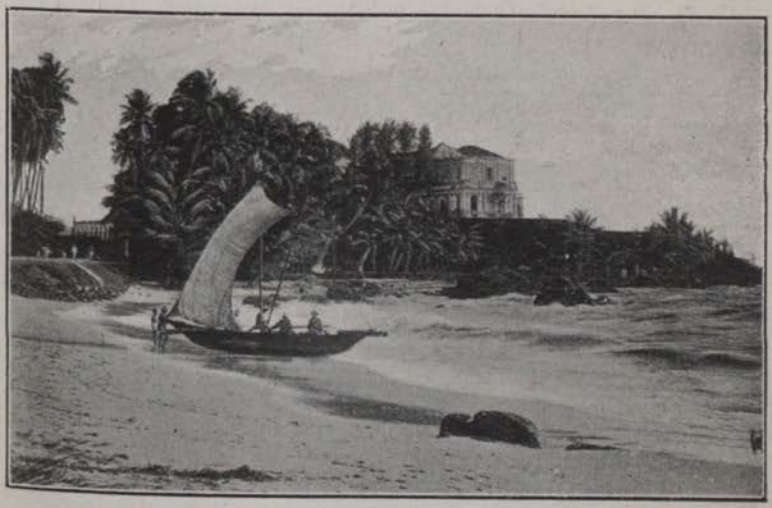
Many wear long hair dressed up at the neck like a woman's; the crown of the head is surmounted by a band of tortoise-shell that encircles the back, but has an open space across the brow. These men wore a strip of cloth wrapped about their legs reaching to the ground, and a cotton jacket; Hindoos with turbans of red, blue, yellow, or white frequently had the sarong draped. The Parsees wore quaint, stiff gabardines, like the Hebrew Priests, but all chattered as noisily as the crows, who

boldy lit upon the ship's rigging, and even darted on the deck if any article of food presented itself.

We transhipped to a launch and soon landed, and in a second or two arrived at this Hotel, which is directly opposite the landing quay, which was lined with jinrick-shaws. The delightful little rubber-tyred carriages, with a native coolie between the shafts, who silently and swiftly runs you about for a fee of a shilling an hour. Native clerks at the desk allot your rooms, electric fans buzz everywhere over a babel of tongues, for a French and German boat are also in port, and people are having tiffin in a palm garden, which we pass on our way to the lift.

Just beneath my window I can see the red-tiled roof apparently of a Catholic mission, as a white cross surmounts it, that suggests Texan and Mexican buildings. These buildings nestle against the luxuriant foliage of the hotel garden trees. A winding road about the quay is covered with carts like gipsy vans, but with high tops of woven fibre, drawn by tiny little bullocks. The sea beyond is blue, the breeze fresh, the eternal electric fan where I'd hoped for the old fashioned punkah, and my temperature is 99.8, but the charm of this place prevails, and I join my companions to saunter in the bazaars that join the hotel.

I am fortunately free from that germ which impels women to buy all that seems attractive, and within one's purse's possibility. So I pass seed pearls, and native stones, ivory elephants with bejewelled trappings, Japanese kimonos—cheaper here than in Tokio—and tawdry Indian embroideries, but hie me to that greatest comfort to the indisposed in a foreign land, the English chemist.



Colombo.

As I was feeling better after tiffin, we wandered forth in 'rickshaws. Being my first experience of them I was entranced with the motion; all about the motley streets we went, with their seething population, who seemed to be there only to heighten the color of the scene. Little, naked babies and older children, with sarongs of gay cloth wrapped round their legs, ran beside us begging, and to me were hard to refuse. The traveller, hardened to them, sternly bids them "go." Older ones, with astonishing cupidity, tossed into our laps pinkish, wax-like blossoms of four petals, which they had deftly turned back to show a skein-like mass of stamens curled in a knob, but tipped with red points. These they called Buddha flowers, and the name appeals to one prepared to adore and accept at its own value this wonderful East.

Colombo seems peppered with tiny beautiful lakes, and each has some form of native life. One that I paused beside to have the inevitable snapshot taken of myself, displayed men standing in the water up to the waist washing their hair, women scrubbing their bodies vigorously, and the dhobi or washerman beating their clothes, sent him to cleanse, against a rock near the shore. Bullocks and a horse swam about in unpleasant proximity. Farther on we came to the celebrated Banyan tree, an excessively large and aged one, but the scent of the cinnamon is not about this part of the town; indeed, I have not found it anywhere in Ceylon, which is one illusion gone. At five we again mounted behind our bare footed and perspiring natives, and trotted along the glorious sea front drive to the "Galleface," an ideally situated hotel. As we approached, private gharris, not unlike the Paris and Montreal fiacre, filled with native

ladies and children passed us, all alert and richly dressed. When in native attire they were quite lovely, but too often they were hideous in European shoddy finery, of a vintage only suitable to wine.

Smart barouches, with two liveried servants, that is, the livery of splendid turban and native dress, rolled by, perhaps conveying the man who haggled in the bazaar over embroideries or necklaces an hour before. For they are rich these merchants, and there are many with five hundred guinea pairs to draw them. The sea thundered in on an exquisitely clean beach on our right. On our left was a wide plateau and bridle path, where equestrians trotted past, or even practised polo, and finally our destination, marked by a clump of giant palms bent in mighty curves from the all impelling breeze that sweeps over the palace-like proportions of the hotel.

We descended for tea on the verandah, but before it came, the wonder of the East, the street juggler's voice was heard below, and we gathered on the verandah railing to see the time-honored trick of making the mango tree grow. A series of conjuring tricks with bird, egg, and brass cups, for which we tossed him two rupees. The importunate fellow was not satisfied, and demanded more for his cobra trick, which we declined to haggle about, and returned along the esplanade, overjoyed with an emotion of sound and color of this ancient isle that made the large revolving tower-light that marks the junction of the town to the Esplanade almost, if not quite, an incongruity.

Rested and bathed, we dined at eight, to a band that played comic opera divinely, but failed lamentably at more ambitious compositions. Then coffee was served in

a garden, lighted like those of Honolulu, with multi-colored electric light bulbs in the trees. Later, in a gharri, we drove under the radiance of a pale girl moon to the Galleface Hotel, whose situation, if possible, was enhanced by the softness of the night. Ships' passengers were dancing. To many these dances are the requiem to shipboard flirtations, for Colombo marks the parting of the ways. We tried to drive home by the Cinnamon Gardens, but our baulking beasty behaved so badly we were forced to let the driver get us home as the horse preferred, through the native village, which is eerie at night and the antithesis of cinnamon on the breeze.

Black night was over all; the lights flickered out in the garden of our Hotel, and we went to bed wondrously silent and satisfied with the strangeness of the day.

Victoria Terminal, Bombay.

BOMBAY.

TAJ MAHAL HOTEL.
BOMBAY.

Dear Charlie,

Three sun-kissed days with always India's coast line before one's eyes, a calm sea underneath, and a fever of joyous anticipation in one's heart, then Bombay. Lying out in the Harbor one first woke up to something unusual at the sight of many bandy legged, black porters, with the draped cotton loin cloth surmounted by khaki shirts, marked "P. & O.," who came swarming on board, seizing all available luggage and bustling it off to the lighters. Then came Parsee agents, in their white duck trousers, and black knee-length coats, buttoned to the chin, heads surmounted by black, high, shiny caps sloping abruptly at the back, their faces most hebraic in caste. Mine from King, King & Co., found me, and after filling in a customs form I was freed from further responsibility of my luggage. Sensation three: when my bearer presented himself, having travelled one thousand miles down from up country, to meet me, and salaaming, quietly presented a letter, which told me he was my bearer. and was called "Gobind." He wears trousers, then a white shirt hanging outside, the tail unblushingly flapping beneath his coat. Evidently the latter garment was made for some previous master. On his head is a turban, and on his face the

most terrifying black beard, parted on the chin, and only capable of description by that past master on the subject of face fungi—Mr. F. Richardson. We pile in a gharri and bowl over the wide, beautiful streets, to this Hotel. I am entranced with the luxury of the palms, the foliage generally, and the similarity in character of the thoroughfares to parts of Back Bay, Boston, though every Yankee in the Union cries me down; and at night I feel this likeness, driving past the cheap shops, where ices and cool drinks are served facing the beach. It is Boston robbed of her hygienic boots and spectacles. The Hotel is delightful, sanely planned to make life for the insect strenuous. The whole interior suggests Turkish baths, with its concrete floors inlaid with white stone, patterned with broken china. Delightful bay windows, the sashes on central pivots filled with a green, translucent glass that afford shade and give an abundance of air. A big porcelain bath between my room and my maid's adds the completing touch of comfort.

At four I wandered over to the Yacht Club to tea with Col. Whitall, having lunched at an early hour on board. It was empty, so one could stare to one's eyes content, without being marked and disapproved as a passer-through. The club lies directly on the bay, a retaining wall alone between its broad path where tea is served, and the native sail boats in the water. A lawn spreads between the path and the Club House, and great trees and hedges luxuriate on the entrance side. I dined here with the Chief Justice, Sir Basil Scott, a veritable modern Chesterfield, and his uncle, Mr. Lang, next evening. On

the Apollo Bunder, preparations are in progress for a pavilion for the reception of the Viceroy designate, Lord Hardinge, who arrives this week.

A Sabbath calm reigned over all, and I returned to the hotel charmed, allured, at peace. I leaned across my window ledge; in a street far below the itinerant worker was weaving bamboo blinds, and closer my eyes rested on the palms and fountains in front of the hotel. Directly under my room a great, wire-netted, sun parlor projects, over which sturdy blue convolvuli clamber, and raise great clumps of blossom till one could swear 'twas only painted scenery.

Monday morning dawned cool and clear, and after chota hazri, or early tea, at seven, we left in a gharri for the Arab stables. One enters these through a tall, plastered arch, in an enormously high wall, and finds oneself in a maze of loose boxes, made of tall bamboo poles, roofed with the same. As we wandered in we saw a row of Arabs lounging in a line, smoking the beloved hubble-bubble pipe or hookah. Several Europeans were inspecting ponies, but we passed on to a very large fibre tent where I was introduced to Ali Ben Talib, the old Arab dealer, and biggest importer of Arab horses in India. Being seated, an almost naked Hindoo passed us blue and white Arabian coffee cups, and poured a delicious beverage from a tin can fitted with a brass top, handle, and spout. Our host then offered us large Arabian cigarettes, smoking his own from a holder, whose mouthpiece was of amber, shaped like a plum, and which he laid lightly against his lips. His dress was very fine, almost pure white woollen socks on his feet, surmounted

by red morocco slippers of European shape; his long, white loose tunic, fastened on one side like a Chinaman's, and reaching the ground, was belted in with a wide band of silver cloth. Over this a long, black coat, well cut and of fine surface cloth covered his white garment. His keen eyes and well chiselled lips set in moustache and beard of grey, were framed in the Arab's head drapery of gold and red, crowned with three rings of crepe hair, the thickness of one's wrist, squeezed in about every five inches with red and silver threads for the space of an inch. Two white garbed attendants with the Arab head dress interpreted for him, and occasionally vaulted on the horses being displayed to us, and rode them bare back up and down the path. Behind us, in the shed with Arab mares, huge prize sheep lay about lazily; whilst the more active goats picked their way nimbly all over the place. Baby kids nestled together in almost every stall where the sais lived. In one a cook was squatting by his primitive fire-place, beating out dough cakes of muffin-like proportion to the thinness of wafers, and the size of a dinner plate before cooking them. In a huge concrete basin, many almost naked grooms were bathing a horse with buckets of water and a spray—wringing out tail and mane, drying and finally massaging the neck, chest, and shoulders with the care usually bestowed on a prize beauty. The crows flew in boldly pecking at the sheep, the sun filtered through the fibre roof and shone in golden bars on the cool enclosure, and with polite salutations and farewells, we came away.

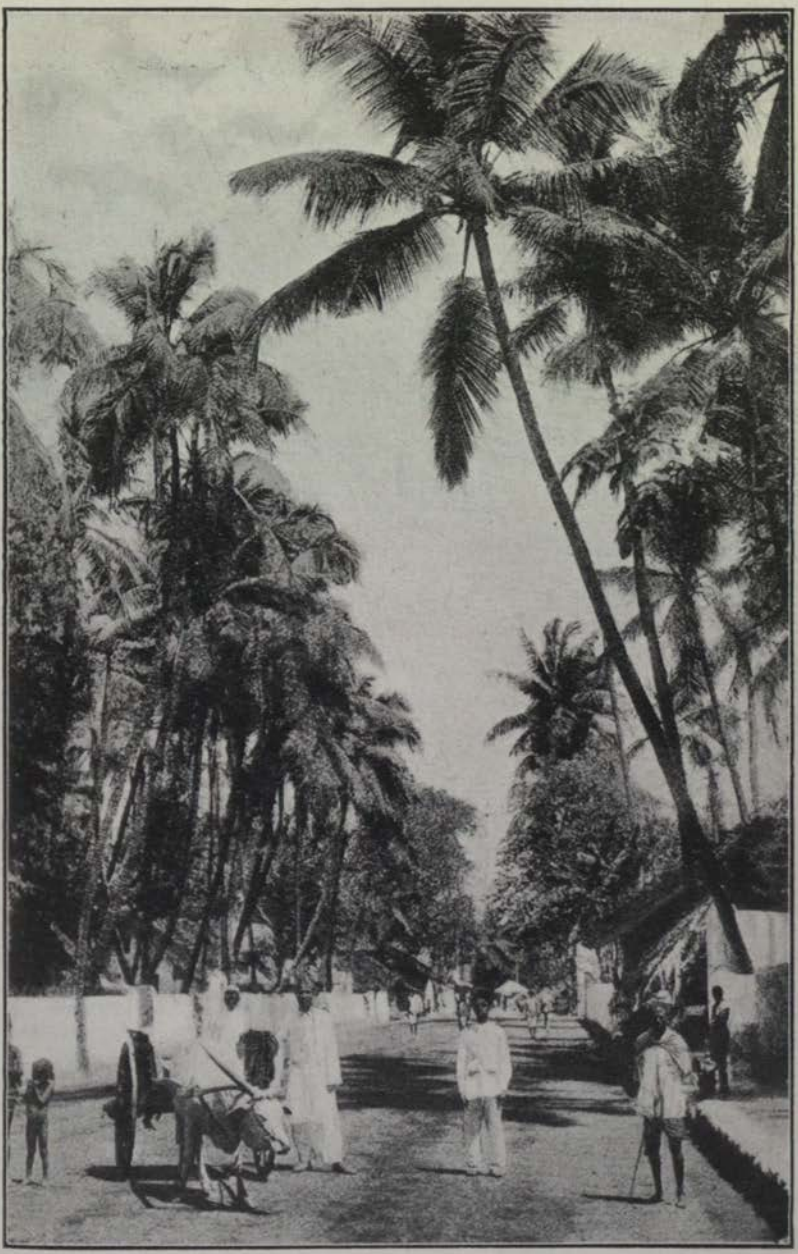
It was a pleasant sight to see His Excellency, the Governor, arrive with his bride at Victoria Terminal the

same afternoon. A body guard of native soldiers, in glorious scarlet tunics to the knees, and flaming turbans, with pennants flying from their lances, followed the carriage as it wound through a heartily cheering crowd, Lady Clarke smiled sweetly and graciously from beneath a huge, red umbrella, held over her head by a native soldier, standing behind with superb poise.

Like Sir Edwin Arnold, I have had the pleasure of experiencing Parsee hospitality. After tea in Madame Tatas' charming bungalow, on my second day in Bombay, I was taken to the wonderful place for the disposal of their dead on Malabar Hill, called the Towers of Silence, wherein all Parsees who die are placed on exposed gratings, divested of garments; in an hour the cruel vultures, who hover greedily above this spot, have left only the skeleton of a once beloved body. The bones are left for days to dry, and are then put in a well in the centre of the tower to crumble, and finally passing out into four drains, go through charcoal and gravel for purification, before being swept to the sea. Having ascended the 80 steps through the garden to the Towers, we pause in a garden reserved on the right hand side for the meditation and prayers of the relatives of the dead. In a Persian-looking, long, low building, the garments of those who bear the body to the Towers are removed, and ablutions performed, whilst an adjacent mosque is used for prayer. When I was in the garden the funeral cortege of a poor man was borne along. The body, on a stretcher enveloped in a white shroud, was carried on the shoulders of about ten men, all clad in white; behind, two black-bearded, white-robed Parsee priests walked, casually muttering prayers, and

three friends of the poor man followed. The huge birds flapped their wings, forming a sable border to the top of the white wall of the tower; solemnity pervaded the whole place. Each sect must adhere to its convictions, but . . . .

To the Mahim Woods, a cocoanut plantation of vast extent, some fourteen miles from Bombay, is a drive that transports one to a realisation of fairy country. Cocoanut palms alone are the vegetation in this vast area, and for upwards of 40 feet they rear their splendid, feathery heads, commingling above in a canopy of green that almost completely shuts out the sky. A narrow road spreads in a network of directions in this wonderful village. Far back, behind the road-side plastered walls, lie native houses—some large and prosperous looking, others grey and gloomy. An air of mystery pervades the place by day, and motoring through at night one is seized with feelings awesome and unreal, especially when a single light placed on the verandah floor, or inside an open door silhouettes the building in the deepening gloom. Native bazaar life abounds; huddled close to the roadside one hears the musical tinkle of the tinsmiths (usually two together) squatting on their hunkers, the utensil held between their knees and hammering in unison. The bottles of syrup, red and yellow, in cheap, European glass bottles are an anachronism in these shops of past ages, where Indian sweetmeats are sold, and cheap German goods lie alongside native articles, proclaiming more potently than learned investigation has proved, the impossibility of



Entrance to Mahim Woods, Bombay.

welding East to West as one body, one thought. It is night, and we fly home, too thoughtful for idle conversation.

My letter of introduction to His Excellency met with prompt response in the form of an invitation to dinner that night. Government House lies above the sea, in a lovely tropical garden on Malabar Hill, and is an open, airy structure, unpretentious, and most suitable to the climate. Three finely-carved screens fit in arches in the centre of the building, dividing it into rooms, but it is otherwise European in atmosphere. A delightful orchestra of twenty musicians discoursed an intelligent programme until eleven, when, my taxi-cab having been taken by another guest, I was forced to remain, until one of the staff kindly got his car around and motored me to the hotel. Air, cool and soft as a caress falls over Bombay at midnight (this week the moon is full). Native life is hushed, it is the hour for spirit communion with the beauties of Nature—but, one goes to bed.

An attempt next day to reach the water tank failed in its specific intention, but through getting "bushed," as one says in Australia, we found a picture my memory will always sense with acute delight. Day trailed away after a passionate, red-gold kiss to the fringe of palms on the horizon; her face paling like a good woman's, sweetly with advancing age. A tenderness in the sky brought out a warmth of red brown in the earth and scrub, deepened the filigree of papul tree and lent a giant hardness to the palm trunks. A purple haze clothed the distant hills; a cold moon, round and watchful, rose in the East, producing a shiver of conscious

affinity. One throbbed in unison with the pulse this great land holds! India, beloved Mistress of Emotions! I salute you for the hour.

The Princess Mary Gymkhana is a place the newly-arrived European regards with pleasure. Here Parsee, Mahommedan, and Hindoo ladies emerge from seclusion, and respond to the call of the West. It lies on the city front, swept by sea breezes, a Club House, and long stretch of croquet and tennis lawns. Three days a week it is strict zenana, but on the other days gentlemen are admitted as guests. Lady Jehangir, a handsome Parsee, vivacious as a French woman, and knowing her Europe as perfectly as India, kindly gave me an opportunity to see this interesting Club on a day when native gentlemen were admitted. Amongst the lovely Parsee ladies, in their gaudy silk sarais and magnificent jewels, sat fat native princes and titled Parsees. The day faded, the chill of sunset alone made real the lovely sense of color on graceful forms, moving with the incomparable tread of the Oriental to a European band discoursing comic opera music.

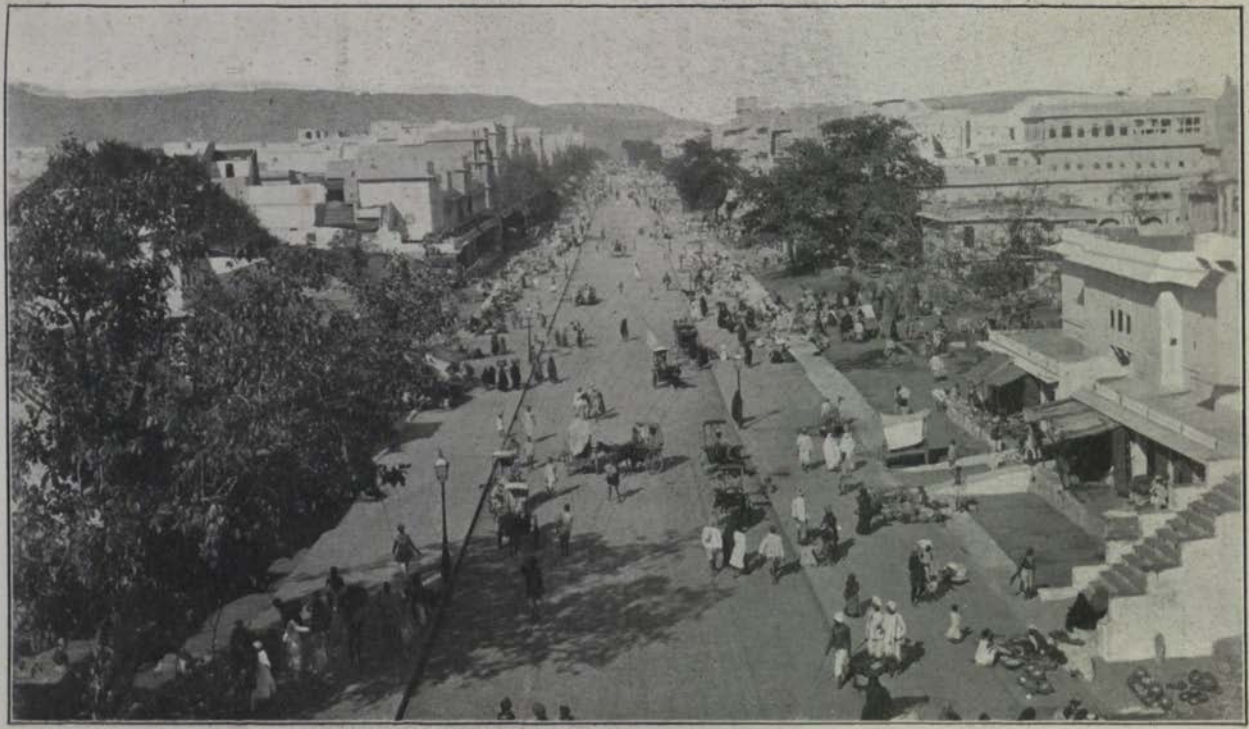
That night I dined at the Orient Club, and listened to curious sentiments. I am an Imperialist and a subtle indefinable sense told me my views of Imperial matters and theirs were on a different plan. A fat, black prince, who stuttered and talked in disjointed phrases, was present. I met him again next day at a charming luncheon party given to welcome back to India the Chief Justice of Calcutta, Sir Lawrence Jenkins and his wife.

Lady Jenkins, a woman of incomparable courage and vivacity, is collecting rare stamps for her little son;

leaning across the table she importuned the "Dear, darling Marajah" to hunt up his grandmother's love-letters, and give her the stamps off them, but his Highness, with a sense of humour, stutteringly replied: "My gr-r-and-m-m-mother was a v-very di-d-d-screet wo-man, she burned all her l-l-love letters."

For some curious reason a taxi-cab never returns for you in Bombay. You sit in the calm belief that it will the first time; on the second occasion you sit doubtingly; there is no third time; if you want it, you keep it waiting. This was my second trial, it did not come, and I was sent back in the Maharajah's carriage. Conversation did not flow. I'm a Confederate when I live in America.

I waved adieu to Bombay with regret. I saw the Viceroy arrive, through the courtesy of that prince of kindliness, Mr. Walter Lang, Secretary of the Yacht Club, from the Club Chamber's balcony, and later to the band of the Warwickshire Regiment, drank tea and renewed memories with old naval acquaintances, I should like to say friends, on the Yacht Club lawn. It was a fitting finish to a happy week.



A Street, Jeypore.

AHMEDABAD AND JEYPORE.

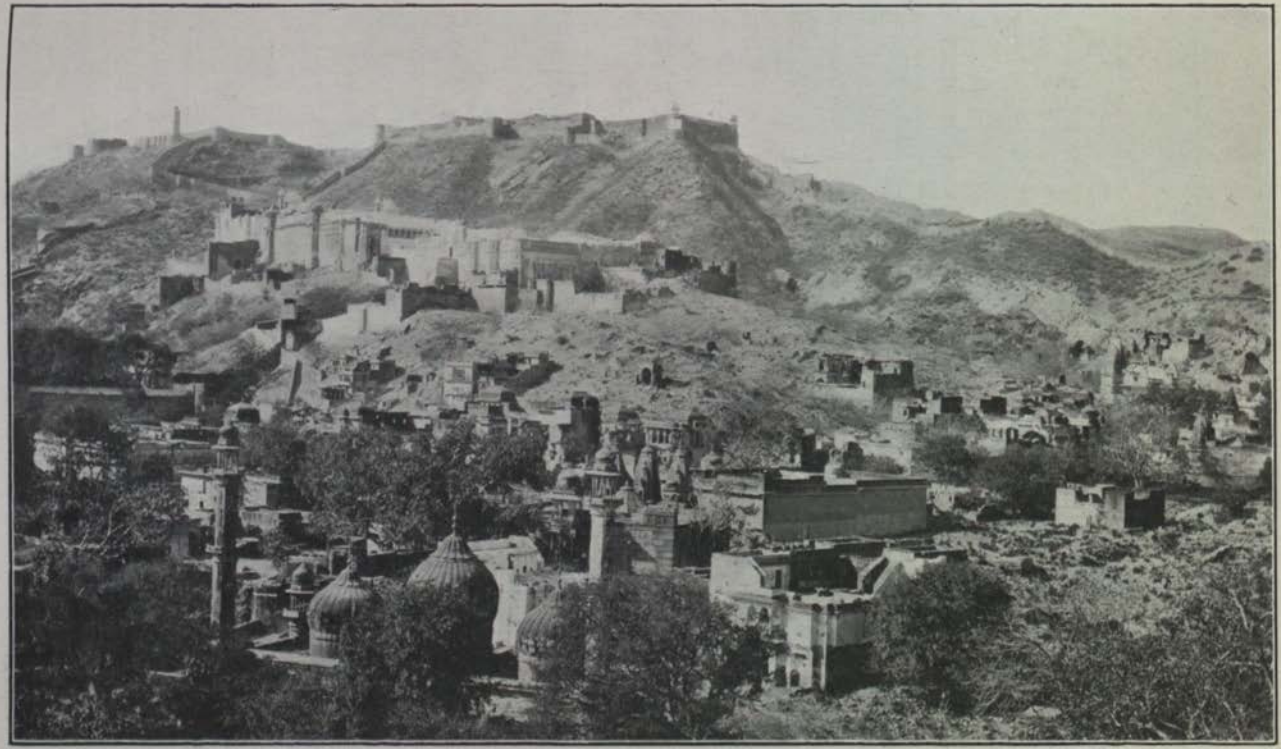
JEYPORE.

My ever dear Roslyn,—

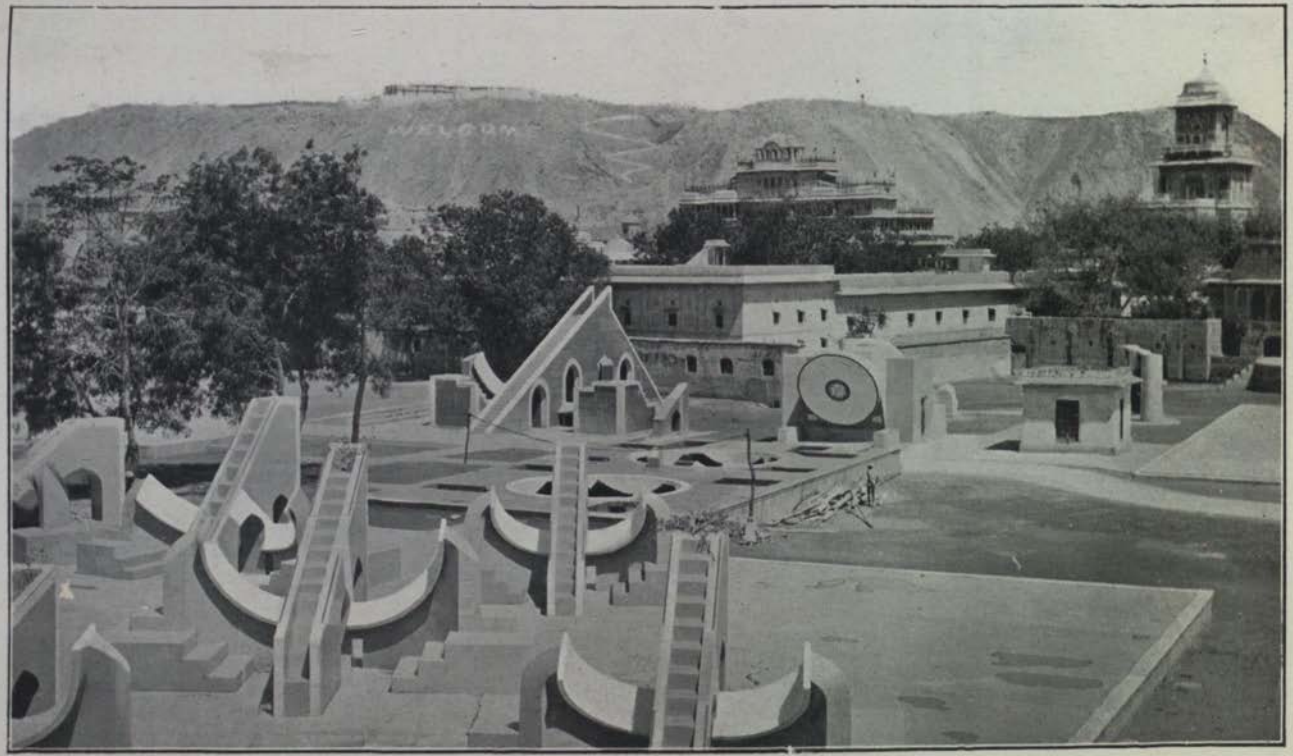
How I wish you had been with me this week-end, when squeezed with my maid into a small compartment of a vestibule train, with a real bathroom attached, a 32 calibre revolver under my pillow, and the fear of the black railway thief in my heart, I started for Ahmedabad. We arrived without accident; though I nearly had a pot at the faithful Hannah, when I felt her covering me with an extra rug in the night. I stealthily drew my Smith & Wesson's product from beneath the pillow, when my attendant turned to pick something up; the hazy light showed a breadth of figure no half-starved night thief can hope to attain this side of Paradise, so the Labour Party won't hang me just yet. My first punkah, a lovely carved beam, with a valance of dirty holland, greeted me from the railway station room I elected to stay in. There was a divinely large white porcelain bath, and the hardest water in the world in my dressing-room, but the day was bright and cool and young, and I, too, sensed something of its freshness. My breakfast, an enormous meal which I blush to acknowledge, being despatched, I loitered for a promised Commissioner, but I subsequently learned he was away.

The whip of the sun started me off through crowds of dirty natives, and inches of germ-laden dust to do my first Temples and Mosques—and I did them, guide-book in hand, the mystery of past ages a passion in my heart, and my imagination prepared for an orgy of delight. I placed my feet trustingly in eighteen inch long canvas shoes to protect the holy places from my polluting (?) tread, and started out to get them all in my head. Well, I didn't. I only got a cold; but I saw them, admired, when it was stone work with any purity of design, as many of them are. I felt I could inhabit some with pleasure on a hot afternoon, with the sun percolating through the stone windows, pierced in geometrical conventional designs, if a nice, soft Indian rug lay on the floor, and some of their big, brass pots were well placed with tall ferns and palms in them, in various places, and a nice young man were murmuring intelligent phrases in my praise; nothing stimulates the truly shy like approbation. If you wish to know what I saw, turn up Ahmedabad in Murray's Guide-Book, and then look at the pictures this letter contains. I bought them for you to look at.

In the afternoon I went to the Hathi Singh Temple—it has a surrounding building the photo. does not reveal, a marble verandah, open on the temple side, but walled on the outer with dozens of images of Hindoo gods reposing behind gilded bars, for all the world like dogs at a bench show. One is inexpressibly shocked at the cheap, modern clock loudly ticking near the principal shrine, and the barbaric crystal chandeliers and awful, flower-bedaubed glass lamps one sees in rooms of magnificent simplicity. The bazaar, too, is disappointing,



Amber—Palace and Fort.



Astronomical Observatory, Jeypore.

but monkeys and camels cheered my childish heart; whilst the impartiality of the flies, who lit first on the sore eyes of the camels, then rested on the native sweetmeats, provided a new emotion and a world of explanation as to the health of the Indian.

In a railway station up the line, my lust for purchasing carved furniture was pandered to by the sight of two beautiful tables, of Loûis XIV. design, of a superb redwood, which I learned was carved in the town. As the place is a pin point on the map, and better known to the Cook tourist as a place for dinner than to the seeker after antiquities, it won't go down to fame.

The morning showed us a distinct change in the native —clean and gay blankets of orange, rose and blue, a human aurora. Ajmere, Sunrise City, Salaam! A man who never travels, but knows everything of every country, having India in the head and no emotion in the heart, had bidden me at a dinner before I left Australia to see Ahmedabad—no matter what else I missed. Result, a wearying day of dirt and antiquity, disappointment in the product of bazaars, and a sense of relief at leaving. True, the crenellated stone work is lovely, but familiarity with the windows so often illustrated makes one conceive them of larger size than they are. But had I not gone to Ahmedabad, I would never have felt the morning kiss of Ajmere. Hills, having the appearing of volcanic structure, festoon about this eye-enchanting place. The palace-like villas on the river, with their broad, stone flights of ghaut steps, running into the water below the stone garden railings, were alive at this hour with bathers and dhobies banging out the clothes. An Irishman,

seeing washing done in this fashion for the first time, exclaimed, "Bedad, that's the first time I iver saw a man break stones wid a shirt."

High above on the summit of a mountain are white buildings of fortress appearance that excite the imagination; and everywhere one glances, restored grandeur gives back reality to one's previously formed mental pictures. The railway station presented gay and less squalid types of native travellers, enveloped in warm blankets of gay colors, frequently with flowered quilted coats, all jangling with many ounces of metal, ankle and arm bangles, and moving with superb grace. The touch of cold dispels the languor of the South 3,000 feet up, but the sun is warm as the embrace of acknowledged love. To live to-day is to realise the greatness of God in creating humans last.

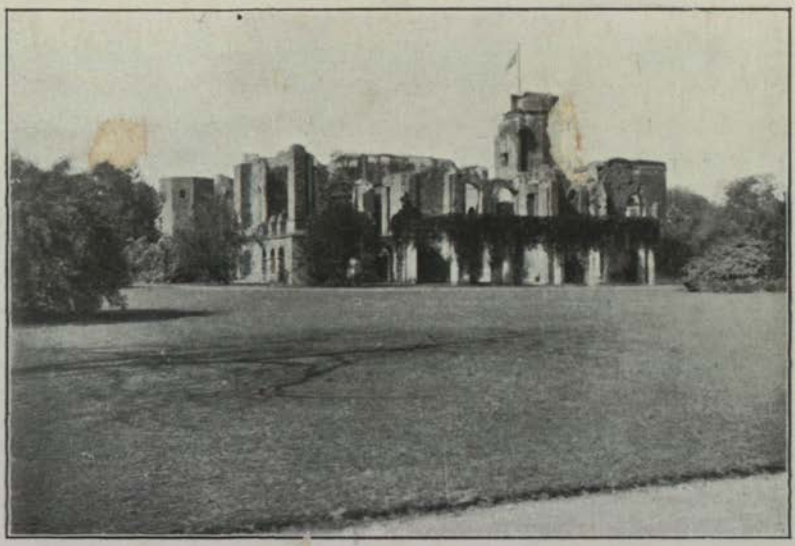
At noon we got to Jeypore and drove in a conveyance guaranteed, I should think, to extract teeth painlessly if used long enough. Bump, rattle, and shake; bump, shake, and rattle; shake, rattle, and bump for a mile and a half, then you arrive at the hotel, and get a bare, clean bedroom and a large bathroom. Being refreshed, you, if wise, will eschew the handsome guide and stick to your bearer, your Murray's red-book, and your peace of mind. I was not wise, and before we had seen the gardens and the buildings surrounding it, I learned of my mistake in taking an educated Hindoo, whose pride of petty knowledge and English drove me to a fine frenzy, so that when the city gates were reached, I was prepared to hate everything, but I did not. I don't want to deceive anyone about Jeypore; people who have been there have

cruelly misled me with tales of pink marble. Gaze on the glorious photos., oh, patient Roslyn! and learn the horrible truth—it's all plaster, kalsomined once of rosy hue, now frequently daubed with dirt, pitch-like in color, and what appears to be carved design on the arches and window frames is but painted on in indigo or white paint. The streets are wide and magnificently smooth, the natives happy and well cared for, never taxed, nursed when ill at the Maharajah's expense, and given opportunities for European education. The Maharajah's stables contain 300 horses, his palace has been exhaustively described, and did not tickle my fancy; but the Astronomical Observatory—Ah! that was a giant child's toy-shop surely. The picture can't convey the mammoth instruments, the tidiness of it all, and the come-to-stay and keep-clean air of the enormous courtyard, in which these quaint and ancient instruments are guarded. Everything seemed to begin by being twenty feet wide, or deep, or long. It was a pantomime scene in real life, and this ancient child mentally applauded the fantasy.

The road to Amber. What visions the words conjure up. The dust was stirred by hundreds of women's feet jingling with anklets, and all gay and festive in attire, for we journeyed on some Hindoo saint's day, and our foot travelling companions were making a pilgrimage. The carriage bowled along evenly, and from it we saw the palace on our right, where the Emperor often went in hot weather to enjoy the breeze from the lake below. Shaded by the hills beyond it is a poetic view, although the lovely lake is almost dry. Just beyond we changed to elephant's back. His tread, at first irritatingly slow,

as we wound around hill paths, not unlike the Blue Mountain roads of New South Wales, became a joy when a bend in the road brought Amber before us. The lake on the left, at the far end as we approach, has a garden enclosed by a retaining wall, and in it are high walls at right angles, broad enough to serve as the paths they are designed to be. Below in an enclosure are the gardens, now filled with shrubs and trees, so tall that they form a canopy to the paths. Just above on the hillside, as our elephant slowly zig-zags round beneath the palace gates, are the erstwhile elephant stables—great, low-walled enclosures. Below them a plateau is built out on to the lake, with a steep flight of steps all along its side, where princes and nobles of long ago went to embark when they "ate the air at evening on the lake," as the native term puts it, or where the myriad attendants of the court bathed daily. This sight on the ghaut becomes so familiar to a traveller in India that its unusual charm when first seen becomes difficult to describe after a few weeks sojourn in the country.

Through a giant gateway, spiked and barred, we entered an enormous courtyard. It is all as perfect as the forts and palace court yards that are inhabited to-day, yet it is one hundred and eighty-three years since it was deserted. Years ago, the legend runs, a daily human sacrifice was made at the entrance (see picture) that we approached; now a goat is slain, and the temple we ascend to, bears testimony to our nostrils of this unsavoury fact. But it is quickly left behind, and we come to the reality of stone carving, inlaid archways, silver barred doors, and ladies' apartments of rare beauty,



The Residency.

Lucknow.

where walls are covered with painted designs of stiff flowers or divided into sections bearing painted blue vases—a pattern I've noticed in all Indian palace apartments. The elevation is enormous, as one looks out of latticed panes of colored glass, or through beautiful pierced marble screens to the lake below, and yet, above and beyond, circling half round Amber is the fort 400 feet higher. Inside all these battlemented walls, and nestling below the Hall of Victory is a garden, an Eastern poem in freshness and a picture to gladden eyes tired of stone and glittering looking-glass work that spangles the walls and ceilings of the various rooms. I do not want to go away from this quiet spot, but my querulous guide urges me to see "back premises." A sense of fright pervades me as I look where he directs on all the maze of passages and buildings that contained the labourers for the Emperor's pleasure, kitchens and artisans' quarters. What a joy for the school boy or girl to explore. But it saddens me, I know not why, as also does the laugh of the low class Hindoo women, huddled in the stabling quarters of the court yard as we come out. The begging of the children's "Salaam, mem sahib," accompanied by a circular rubbing of their stomachs, and a quick action of the fingers drawn together, and placed in staccato action on their mouths is revolting. Cripples come and exhibit sores and deformities, in hope of eliciting alms. Singing voices of returning pilgrims, swirling the dust of the road with their bare feet, heavy metal anklets jangling beneath the women's skirts, sometimes voluminous, sometimes scant cotton cloth wound about their legs almost men fashion. Arms rattling with colored glass and silver bangles, noses

all pierced on one side, sometimes on both, and bearing small, ornate buttons or huge rings, as well ears ladened with heavy gew-gaws. Dirt, grace of movement, merry laughter—the sign-posts to sunny India. The elephant slowly retraced his steps. In the softened light the palace cried out to me to return, to explore the Rajah's apartments with the moonlight filtering through the carved marble screens on to the mosaic arches and inlaid panels of alabaster, to sit and dream in the bathing room, all creamy marble, when the crows and chattering natives' voices were hushed. I felt impelled to return that night (my only one) in Jeypore. "Order the elephant," I cried to the guide, "for nine o'clock. We'll come back to-night." "But, Ladyship," he protested, "no one ever come to Amber at night." "Exactly what I wish, but we will come at night," I said, firmly. "No, Ladyship, it too dark, you cannot take the ____ at night." Dreamily I answer, "I shall come at nine o'clock." Already I see in my mind the exquisitely placed palace and garden, bathed in silver light, and guarded by some precious person asleep by the stern soldier from the hill above. The guide takes up my dreamy tone; his voice is hushed, "But, Ladyship, you cannot come at night to Amber. Tigers, they come at night to drink in the Lake." He paused, and added in an awesome whisper, "Ladyship, they eat you."

LUCKNOW.

LUCKNOW.

Bertie dear,—

If you'd ever been in Texas you would know what I mean by saying Witzler's Hotel is Mexican. It is a two-storied flat roof building, with balconies to both stories, and is a series of detached buildings enclosing a garden. A high white plaster arch is in the outside gate, surmounted by a life-sized Diana, whom some native artist, to relieve her white monotony, has endowed with the pinkest legs I've ever seen. Result, on seeing it for the first time, one either blushes or screams with laughter—propriety being entirely a matter of temperament. It was so delightful to be met by Captain and Mrs. Hore-Ruthven. After the greetings they brought me to this hotel in Mahon's car, as he is away, and as his guests they have the use of it. That is one heavenly point of Indian hospitality; you have the use of everything that is your neighbours—his ox, his ass, even the stranger within his gates.

The hotel is far from being luxurious, for in one's bath-room is a common tin tub, and a tin dipper with which to pour cold water over oneself. The Bisti, as the water carrier is called, brings one hot water, coming into one's bath-room through a door from a back passage. One never sees him coming or going unless

one wishes to. He is a curious-looking creature, with a goat skin tanned and stretched back into the original shape, then slung legs up by a strap over his shoulder, the neck used as a spout to fill water jugs. The sweeper, with a handleless broom of coarse canes, comes along in the morning and stirs up the dust from the corners of your room on to all your clothes, and leaves your bearer to tidy the room after him. This is all the service the hotel supplies outside the Kitmagars in the dining-room, and in small places one is often better served by being attended at meals by one's own bearer.

There are two polo grounds in Lucknow, but the one the matches were on this week is a lovely spot at Dilkusha, surrounded by shade trees. The raised platform for seats being under an avenue, and at the end of the stand, tents are up for tea. Not the white linen things we know, but gaily coloured affairs with fringed valances, underfoot bright cotton carpets, and everyone comes to tea who has paid admission. Behind the spectators' seats a band plays each afternoon, by courtesy of one of the resident regiments. The charm of Indian hospitality to itself is so noticeable after residence in a labour-governed country, where all phases of social life are grudged to the Army, and the pastimes of officers and gentlemen looked upon with no favour at all by the untutored politician. Hunting is the best possible training for a cavalry officer, and polo second, as all English officers know. Result, in India the training for war is made a pleasure that keeps her men fit and ready for action. Mrs. Hore-Ruthven's brother, who is A.D.C. to the L.G., is playing in these matches, so we went to polo with a personal interest.

I must tell you of an experience I had at a dinner that Captain Pollok gave the first night of this race week. A delightful entertainment before a fancy dress ball, at a place adjoining the polo grounds, called the Mahommed Bagh Club. Bagh is the Indian word for garden. In this case it's rather a misnomer, for the compound does not abound in flowers, but has tennis courts about it. The majority of the guests were in fancy dress. Some of the women looked divine. One girl, who rejoices in the *petit nom* of "Naughty Mary," was absolutely adorable as a Romney girl, poudre, with a huge, blue satin hat, a white muslin fichu-befrilled frock, with mitts and patches, and such a pair of eyes! No wonder they dub her "Naughty."

A most alluring lady, born in the country, I'm told, was an ideal Sonia in the Marsovian dress. She is also a most perfect dancer. Then for distinction, a French Marquise of about 1776. This lady, with great charm of manner, made one realise the delight of fancy dress more than all the others.

I was plain mem sahib, and feeling rather shy, I sat between a mere boy, who was also feeling timid, and a fat person of great geniality, who says he was at Eton with you. They call him the "Honorable Perks" here, or "Champagne Charlie," as he is selling wine, and has enormous luncheon and tea parties in a gorgeous tent each day at the races, to advertise his brand. One sees everybody at them. One day I sat next Sir John Hewitt, Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces. At the next table sat the Maharajah of Jodpore, where the breeches come from, a lame, slender native, with distinctly Jewish cast of countenance. The youth and

fashion, the racing men and local officials, are all bidden to these parties, and we eat, drink, and are merry, and though we don't die on the morrow, we fear we may, and sometimes wish we hadn't eaten so plenteously. Across the table at Captain Pollok's dinner, I was conscious of being the subject of conversation. I did not mind; it's natural when you are new to a place to excite enquiries and the consciousness that one's hair is well done, one's frock quite right, gives a peace to the possessor that passeth understanding, to the male mind at least. After dinner, the man opposite was presented, and asked for a dance. I gave him choice of twelve or thirteen; the former being a two-step which he could not do, he suggested we should sit it out, and dance the thirteenth. I agreed. I am new, and have not been introduced to many men, and the least attractive man is better at a dance than the ghastly sensation of being part of the mural decorations. He murmured things about the charm of my voice; said it thrilled him. I expect it was the port; it often leaves men incapable of analysing their emotions.

We danced in a rather dark room. Such a mistake, the ballroom should be gloriously bright. The "Kala Juggas," as the Hindoo calls those places so fraught with romance, which we refer to as "sitting out places," should be what the Hindoo calls them, "Black holes"; only for holes read comfy chairs in obscure places. At this dance there was a uniform gloom in all places, except the supper room, where I found myself later with a cheery party of Major Crawley and his wife, who was the captivating Marquise, and a piquant lady in black, satin Pierrette dress, who is the Commissioner's wife, the

A.D.C. to the C. in C. at Calcutta, who says he'll do what he can to make my stay there pleasant. Then Major Crawley's sweet-faced sister-in-law, like myself new to India, my partner for twelve and thirteen, and the "Honorable Perks," who ordered his own champagne lavishly, though the majority preferred black beer, which is really a splendid supper beverage, and was introduced to Simla some years ago by a certain German Consul, and has made his fame all over India. It's a thing that makes early gallops possible with a clear head, after a very late night.

Supper ended with the eleventh dance, and I joined my partner for twelve and thirteen as we left the table, and went, at his suggestion, to the Billiard Room, which is even gloomier than any of the others. They made no attempt to decorate the Club, which, after our superb effects at Home, seems curious in a land abounding in cheap service and luxury of palms. We sat on a hard, unromantic sofa, and I assure you there wasn't a condition of allurement anywhere, and my partner was well over forty. We used to think the boys in the American Fleet quick off the mark. I remember Lady Poore telling me after their memorable week in Sydney in 1908, that they began where most men leave off. Well! this Major man began where the American Fleet left off. He poured out feverish remarks about my being the one woman on the earth he'd ever wanted to kiss at first sight. I was "irresistible, adorable." I regarded him curiously. How a man with gaps between his teeth caused by those not lost but gone before, and only half his hair, could flatter himself so, was beyond my comprehension. "I felt when I first looked at you at

dinner that I'd like to lay my lips on yours and leave them there for an eternity," he said. This was too revolting. "Good heavens! where is Captain Sandy?" I gasped; just why I don't know, but I felt he at least was safe. "Don't be angry," the elderly Lothario pleaded. Angry! I was furious. "You will kindly take me to get my cloak, and then you will call my carriage, you utterly detestable person!" I remarked, and stalked out. He spluttered apologies till I was off.

Next day he greeted me at "Champagne Charlie's" luncheon as though nothing had happened. Naturally, I returned the salutation, but avoided him. I told the "Sandys," who thought it rather sudden; I told a dear, pretty lady, with two sweet daughters from Simla. "My dear," she said, "I don't wonder at his wanting to kiss you; all men try to kiss people out here. They even want to kiss me; but, if you gave him no encouragement?"—there was a note of inquiry in her voice, which I promptly set right. "Really, it was rather tiresome." Well! the whole of India may be a man's mouth. but I'm sure I don't want to kiss it.

India, with its kissing men, would be a grand thing for some of our yearners at home. A season for them here would, I'm sure, take a lot of the pinched looks out of their faces; but I don't think there's a love-hungry look in my eyes; do you? The attractive photo of the Chuttar Munzil Club will show you where I went to another dance. This building was a Native Prince's palace early in the last century, and his wives were kept in a house on the opposite bank of the river, a subterranean passage leading to it. I asked one of the members of this Club if they still kept all the comforts of

home there, but he assured me the passage had long since been blocked up. The ballroom floor in this splendid Indian palace is hung on chains, and one never tires dancing on this beautiful vibrating surface. There are handsome carved wooden screens of fine proportion in the entrance hall, and an air of prosperity about the Club that is pleasing at first glance and all subsequent ones. The ladies' cloak room arrangements leave much to be desired, as the native ayah is absolutely useless to make one look tidy if one gets disarranged in the dance, and she is usually huddled on the floor in her voluminous, not too white, cotton draperies, and leaves you to scramble for your cloaks and scarves at your impatient leisure.

I motored home from this dance with a man who'd taken me to supper, where he diverted me by ordering six poached eggs and eating all of them. I told him I was going to Agra. He seemed to think I should wait over a week and go with him to see it properly. "But why should I wait for you?" "Because I want you to," he began. The reason seemed insufficient and verging on the sentimental. I talked about the beauty of the night for the remainder of the drive.

At the races General Mahon kindly offered us his box. Even at these tiny courses one has private enclosures in front of the grand-stand, which is so much nicer than our Australian way. The General's is next the vicefegal box, but no ceremony is observed by those in authority here. The Lieut. Governor walks about the course unhampered by an A.D.C., goes to the betting ring, marks the prices, and places his bets himself, and is beloved by all the racing fraternity.

I am so interested in all the Anglo-Indian types—one, a woman of forty or over, beautifully and conspicuously gowned, with her adoring subaltern in attendance She's out from home to escape the English winter. The officers' wives sit chatting in little groups, of more obvious reasons for her presence here. The tongue of my sex is not always as generous in quality as in quantity. It's a dear little meeting; the smallest I've ever been at, and taken so seriously. Gentlemen jockeys give a touch of personal interest. Horses owned by many of our new friends, make it exciting, and at Mr. E. T. Marshall's, the well-known Calcutta racing man, suggestion I back "Coal," General Mahon's horse, and win. It is Coal's fifth race, and fifth victory.

The drive back from the races takes one past Dilkusha House, which stands a lovely ruin in an extensive compound, as one hears the gardens called all over India. It was in this picturesque spot General Havelock died with the knowledge that the whole garrison had been safely rescued from the Residency, twelve days after the place was taken by Sir Colin Campbell in 1857.

As we drove home from the races the streets were being swept and watered. In one block I counted 43 native men brushing the dust away. Four bistis scattering water from their goat skins by hand; and four low-class women, almost as scantily clad as the Bombay fishwife, but without the seaside woman's superb figure, gathering up cattle dung to make into fuel. This was placed in baskets on their heads and borne along with splendid poise and utter indifference. One sees everything transported on the heads of coolies and porters, from luggage to furniture. A tale is told of an old woman at Simla

who carried a grand piano up the hills on her head; but she expired on arrival there. One does not wonder. The dress of the native about Lucknow is quite subdued in color, and, except for a splendid Tuluchdar or two on the racecourse, one who flaunted about in peach brocade thousers and coat, with a square of sandal-scented emerald brocade over his shoulders, we've seen nothing to gasp at here.

Returning from the races with a large bundle of paper notes of less than a pound in value, one feels quite cheerful, and rich, when one talks of winning hundreds; but it's rupees, and so woefully little next day when in front of the hotel in a wicker chair, I sat to invest in jewellery from the native vendor. This form of shopping obtains all over India. The merchant arrives with huge, cotton enveloped bundles, or cheap English tin trunks, and squatting on the floor displays wares he has the temerity to demand Bond Street prices for. The native juggler was doing tricks at my elbow, producing eleven live birds out of an egg-shaped box, and petitioning to do the mango trick in front of my bedroom for R's 5. He prefers doing it privately, as he makes more money; but I have seen it in Ceylon. so, instead, took a lean Mahommedan fortune teller across the compound to reveal my fate. He produced chits to prove people have paid him R's 30 for a fortune. I demurred at such extortion, so he suggested a pound. I jeered at his high price; said I was a poor woman. It was then his turn to jeer. He did it in these words of flattery: "My Queen, if you are not rich now the luck mark is on your beautiful forehead that you will have millions of rupees." We finally settled on R's 5, and he told with most re-

markable accuracy of the past. If his prognostications of the future are as correct, we have not much to worry over ahead. So I got at least a calm spirit and a morning's amusement for my money.

Lucknow to you, I know, spells only siege; but that which remains is so poetic a monument, it is hard to realise the horror it has been the stage of in the past.

I did it thoroughly with the "Sandys" one morning, guided about by an Irish veteran, to whom it all seems as fresh as any event of the past five years; but this, I fancy, comes from constant reiteration of the facts to visitors. The inscriptions on some of the tombstones of young mothers, mere girls in years, with their little babies beside them, struck me as one of the most pathetic things in this monument to British patience and endurance. As one wandered down to the Gumti banks and had the position of the enemy explained, it made the bravery of Capt. Butler, who left the Residency, crept through the enemy's line, swam the river and informed the force on the right bank of the mutineers abandonment of defence along the canal of Ghazi-ud-din Haidar Khan, a feat of magnificent courage,

I went back to lunch at Flagstaff House, where the Sandys are staying, and Mr. "Billy" Miles, of the Royal Dragoons, and his sister, who is just out for the winter. The General's bungalow is so delightful after the stupid German Hotel. It was nice to see good old silver on the table, and a tasteful arrangement of old brass and blue china in the dining room, and his servants are excellent. The Indian servant is far from that perfect creature, who anticipates your every want with silent

grace of movement. He seldom has any manners, and addresses you casually.

Every day at the races I've lunched with Mr. Thellusson's party, and one morning he motored me to the great Imambarah. It's an enormous room filled with mirrors, and chandeliers holding common glass lamps, and contains a tawdry affair covered with beaten silver, which looks like the lead lining from a tea chest. This is a King's Throne. The great hall of the Imambarah is 162 feet long, 53 feet wide, and 49 feet high. We went through the Turkish Gate to the bazaar, where I bought a table cloth of chicken work on muslin at four times its value. Mr. Thellusson's opulent presence and our arrival in the motor, I'm sure, were responsible for the price.

I chaperoned the two pretty Bingham girls to the races in the afternoon, after which they took me to tea at "Naughty Mary's"; it conjured up my lost youth when Kipling's charming women were my pet delight. I wished then to grow into a Mrs. Hawkesbee. I'm sure "Naughty Mary" will.

I dined with General Mahon, to whom I longed to talk; he looks so interesting; but the party was small, and not for five seconds did the conversation diverge from that noble animal, the horse. After dinner three of the men thought it unsafe for me to be travelling alone, and offered to do a personally conducted tour; but I shall leave here early to-morrow morning unaccompanied and unafraid.

FATEPUR SIKRI.

THE CECIL HOTEL.
AGRA.

My dear John,

On a cool, sunny morning I left this Hotel in a motor with General and Mrs. Hickman, the latter's pretty daughter Miss Marjory Bingham, and Col. Taylor, to see Fatepur Sikri. The city, built in every detail by Akbar, but deserted by him for Agra, owing to the difficulty of obtaining good water, has always been inhabited, and to-day has a scattered population, our guide assured us, of 70,000 natives.

All along the perfectly smooth road we were shaded by an avenue of trees, which is being supplemented by young ones growing inside circular walls of clay, topped by a fringe of twigs. I was amused to hear this is done to preserve them from the onslaught of the hedgehogs. Col. Taylor is putting in three months in India from no love of travel or sight-seeing. General Hickman, however, was as interested as I to see and understand it all, and was a delightful sight-seeing companion; and as we walked over the wondrous city with an intelligent guide, I felt I was viewing comfortably and thoroughly, all that I had come to see.

Akbar's three wives' houses are absolutely different. His Hindoo wife had the least attractive one; but

Miriam, his Jeypore wife, who the guide insisted was a Portuguese Christian, had what was called "sonahra makan," or golden house, on account of the profuse gilding both inside and out. This and her Turkish bath are quite perfect. The Turkish Queen's house, now a single room fifteen feet square, is a marvel of carving. Built of red sandstone, there is not one inch left uncarved anywhere. The ceiling and the pillars of the verandah that surround it are most beautifully cut. A dado four feet deep inside depicts scenes of forest and animal life, and above this, stone lattice screens form shelves.

The tomb of Salim Chisti is a white marble lace-like building. A solid ebony door, ornamented with brass, enhances the snowy whiteness of its pierced marble walls, and the canopy over the tomb inside is inlaid solidly with Mother-of-pearl. The cenotaph is engraved with the date of its completion and the Saint's death, 1580. Hanging to one of the marble screens that form the walls are countless pieces of tape and bits of colored string, tied on by the childless women, both Hindoo and Mohammedan, who come to pray for the Saint's intercession to alter their condition.

The Mosque is a splendid building, and copied from the one at Mecca. Rising majestically to a height of seventy feet, it breathes a benediction over the tombs and palaces. A tiny tomb at the back is pointed out as the grave of the Saint's son, who was sacrificed to appease the gods, and to spare Akbar's son Jehangir's life when he was born. Wandering here, there, and everywhere, we came constantly upon buildings, each more lovely than the last. The plain, small building known as the Girls' School has a huge stone-paved Court

in front of it, blocked like a pachisi board, with the Emperor's stone seat in the centre, on which he sat to direct the moves of live slave girls who acted as pieces in the royal game. Beyond this is the Panch Mahal, erected as a pleasure house for the court ladies. Fifty-six columns support the ceiling of the first storey; in the stone-carved designs with which they are covered no two are exactly alike. This building rises to a height of five stories, each smaller than the one below, till nothing but a small kiosk remains on top.

Akbar's khwabgah, or house of dreams, on the second storey of which he slept, bears paintings all over the walls. These have been varnished to preserve them, a precaution which has spoiled any charm they may have originally possessed. Two shafts below, support a platform, and are beautifully carved, as is almost every room in this wondrous place. The diwan-i-khas has a curious carved pillar in the centre of the floor, running half way up the height of the room; here it diverges into four bridges across to the corners, where they join a balcony which runs around the interior. From the outside this single chamber has the appearance of a two-storey building. And it is said secret affairs of State were here discussed by the Emperor, who sat in the centre with one of his four ministers in each corner of the balcony.

Near by is the Ankh Michauli, a delightful building of mazelike construction, where one is told the playful Emperor chased the ladies of the court in the game of hide and seek. It consists of three large rooms surrounded by narrow passages, the light percolating dimly through pierced stone screen windows.

In front of this building is the astrologer's house, built in the twelfth century style of Hindoo architecture. Huge monsters emit curiously carved struts from their mouths to the dome, which once was painted. At the Elephant Gate, back of all these buildings, we paused to enjoy a view of great beauty. Over the twenty feet high archway are the two mutilated elephants attributed to Auraugzeb. To the left are the polo grounds, and further off still rises the Dur Minaret, a circular stone tower studded with stone elephants' tusks, and rising to a height of seventy feet. Here Akbar came to shoot antelope, and the tower was built as a monument to his favorite elephant. A curious fear pervades the average native child's mind in India of the elephant, and screams and tears are the usual accompaniment to incessant chatter when an elephant approaches.

The waterworks are a wondrous construction on the left of the road as one retraces one's steps from the Elephant Gate. An enormous well, surrounded by rooms and staircases, continues into a system of reservoirs, from which a series of Persian wheels raise the water, and disperse it throughout the palace.

In the Palace of Birbal, built by the Rajah of that name for his daughter, we paused to refresh ourselves. Col. Taylor at last showed a little interest in the proceedings, and helped Miss Bingham cut bread and butter with an interest I had not thought him capable of showing about anything, especially after his total indifference to all the wonders he had so recently seen. In this cool two-storied building of red sandstone, consisting of four rooms fifteen feet square, we roamed about whilst the kettle boiled. Victor Hugo is reported to have said of

this, "If it were not the most minute of palaces, it was the most gigantic of jewel cases." The ceilings of the lower rooms are supported by a frieze elaborately carved, as are the recesses, walls, arches, and doorways. The upper rooms are covered with cupolas, which are supported by walls of octagonal construction, and finely carved corbel brackets, stretching across the angles of the rooms.

Outside the carving is as beautiful; it has two entrance porches on the ground floor, and two above with balconies enclosed by stone screens. After tea we explored a great courtyard enclosed on three sides with stables for one hundred and two horses and many camels. In some of the mangers we saw the stone rings used for the horses' halters.

As we walked away we paused to see the Gate of Victory, which rises 172 feet high, above a magnificent flight of steps. The view of the country is superb when looked at through this archway, on which is engraved inside, "Jesus, on whom be peace, said: 'The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house on it. The world endures but an hour, spend it in devotion.'" With this advice in our minds we left Fatepur Sikri.

Outside the city wall is a school, wherein the marvellous application of the Hindoo is shown. Here children diligently set themselves to the task of learning to write through the medium of a slab of rough slate, a stick chewed at one end until it resembled a brush, and common clay dissolved into thin mud for a writing fluid. What Australian child would pursue studies under these conditions?

AGRA.

CECIL HOTEL,
AGRA.

Madge dearest,

Across the years of separation our thoughts have constantly embraced, and now, can I make you sense I wonder, some of the joys my mind has found here?

I left Lucknow 6.30 a.m. Sunday for Gwalior. Judge Russell, of Bombay, had given me a letter to His Highness the Maharajah, which I had forwarded, announcing my arrival, but I defy any English woman whose knowledge of Hindoostani is bounded by "Jao," "Argy," "cha," and "poggle" to get on a train ostensibly bound for one place, to keep on that train, and arrive at her objective point. You change carriages at the command of your native bearer, in a mild submissive spirit, for the time table is planned to drive you silly. So, though my ticket said "to Agra via Jhansi and Gwalior," I arrived here by the East Indian Railway, although my ticket read I.M.R.

Three times during the day did I sign papers to the effect that I was an English lady with a maid travelling without tickets over that line, and I expected an action for damages on my arrival at Gwalior; but after a day of misery and misunderstanding, when I found myself at Agra at 6 p.m., I wisely got off the train, figuratively

kissed the Maharajah's elephant good-bye for ever, and prepared to be happy. After a good night's rest I got a guide at three rupees a day and drove to the Fort and Palace. I longed to have you with me. I began in underground rooms used as hot weather apartments for the court ladies. They are cool and shady, and look over the river, and lead down to where furnaces are built, that heated the water in huge cauldrons which was subsequently piped to the various baths in the Palace above. Oh! they lived in cleanliness in India in the seventeenth century, and they sometimes died that way. For down in these shady catacombs is shown a beam, where "death by hanging and drowning," was accomplished by suspending the offender by a silk cord to the beam, and leaving him dangling till the cord snapped, and he dropped into a deep well below, and was carried out to the river. Above this gruesome place are the slave women's apartments, and the reception and sleeping apartment of the Lady of the Taj. Oh, Madge! life was just one perfumed sweetmeat for a favorite in those days; so simple, so satisfying.

The Queen's baths had ceilings of glittering talc overlaid with a fine pattern of ivy leaves and vines in white plaster. The marble walls are painted in brilliant colors and gold in geometrical borders. The deep marble depression in the floor wherein they plunged was fed by water that flowed through an aperture in the wall in a cascade over a series of niches holding colored lights, into a lower basin-like passage of intricate inlaid design of colored marble leading into the bath.

A curious phenomenon is the piece of sunstone over a door leading into a passage that is quite dark, except

for the curious light-giving quality of a slab of this stone set in the wall on the way to a white marble room with curious latrinal appointments; the only one of its kind, I'm told, in all India. Where the sunstone is found, of what it consists, the guide could not tell us, but even on a sunny morning it emits in the shade, a bright, phosphorescent glow.

All about the inner rooms are pierced marble fences. The sleeping room, with its receptacles in the walls, wherein one tries to thrust one's arm down to the elbow, as one is told the Queen's jewels were kept there. Look at the pictures; can't you fancy the joy of life on a soft cushion, with sandalwood scented, silk curtains hanging from the bronze rings that are still in the marble ceiling, and gazing out upon the glorious view of the river like a great serpent winding in and out of the cornfields. The splash of the rose-water fountain in the room back of this, which is like a verandah open on one side to a tiny courtyard paved in black and white marble, like a chess board; whilst down below the massive walls dipped into a moat, which effectually guarded its dungeons when the drawbridge was up, and the great gates barred. It was like a fairy tale and a dream of a thousand days of dear delights.

This delightful palace is tawdry Eastern, if you like, but exquisite to a degree is the Pearl Mosque, commenced in 1648, and taking seven years to build. In front is a tank thirty-seven feet long, where lovely ladies used to sit under fountains of colored water, in marble niches around the sides, to amuse the Emperor. The Diwan-i-am, or Hall of public audience, I also send a picture of. But I must tell you of a large plateau of

grass, surrounded by stone balconies with archives at one end, where an extended platform was projected for the Emperor to sit on to fish, for the plateau was once a pond. There is a bazaar where the merchants used to display their wares to the court ladies, who could only peer through stone and marble latticed screens at the temptations below; and a grape garden 280 feet square, which once was a mass of pergolas, but is now planted with flowers growing close to the ground in a carpet pattern.

On the East side of this is a lovely gilded and painted marble hall, called the Khas Mahal, and in one corner of the grape garden are three beautifully frescoed rooms that were the apartments of Shah Jehan. The room nearest the river is very handsome, and in it Shah Jehan died gazing at the Taj and longing for the lovely lady it contained. The one real love he knew in an existence of many little affections.

I send you a picture of a red sandstone room most chastely carved. It was built by Akbar, and is pure Hindoo. The stone ceiling is wonderful with stone cross beams, carved with great dragons.

As I came away I passed an enormous monolithic cistern of granite. It is nearly five feet high and eight feet in diameter, and was used as a tub by Jehangir. I then drove to a merchant's shop, and for two hours looked at silk, worked with gold, and marvellous curtains of gauze and silver. Bed-spreads of silk and precious metals were offering at £100, and I handled emeralds at extortionate prices, and barbaric ornaments nearly a foot square, a blaze of rubies and diamonds. Pearls in such

profusion one gathered them up in enormous tassels, and left them behind.

Agra is not all architecture; one Otto Weylant is a distinct feature of the place, and to his wonderful carpet factory I went with my friends, General and Mrs. Hickman, and spent a delightful morning.

Stopping in front of an ordinary looking house one was compelled to gasp with pleasure at the vista seen through a back door of a chrysanthemum garden. On entering this, a large fibre-covered shed like the Arab stables at Bombay confronted one, and a sound of chanting—this, as we walked to the opening grew louder, until it became an organ swelling volume of sound as the marvellous picture of the interior revealed itself to our delighted eyes.

Running across the long, narrow building were a dozen or more frames holding the threads which form the foundation of the carpets. On a long bench in front of each sat as many as eight, ten, or twelve little boys, and between each loom on the floor, cross-legged, with a huge book before him, sat a man.

The book contains the pattern of the carpet in rhyme, and the man reads off a line in a droning voice, which is echoed in turn by the small workers, whose fingers, with incredulous swiftness knot in and press down the threads of their section. One tiny creature, perhaps four years old, was engaged in the few cream threads which formed the outer edge of the carpet he was working on, which in any case was always the same number of threads, but he'd chant in Hindoostani "eight white threads," then literally fall off the bench, scramble to the other side to put in eight stitches there, and run back after

each number was called out. A fine carpet has 350 stitches to the inch, and not more than an inch and a half can be accomplished in a day.

On Friday at noon a most wondrous sight is the Jamid Masjid, where nine thousand Mohammedans stand to pray. Five miles from Agra, at Sikandra Bagh, a fine gateway opens on the lovely garden enclosing the tomb of the Emperor Akbar, a pyramidal building seventy-four feet high, built in four stories, three of which are red sandstone, and the fourth enclosing the cenotaph (see picture) of marble. The real resting place is in the basement, reached by an inclined plane. A cloister runs about the lower storey, the vaulted ceiling of which is frescoed in blue and gold. A chapter of the Koran is written under the fresco on a scroll a foot broad.

Each square of the lattice marble windows on the fourth storey is carved in a different pattern. Back of the monolith cenotaph, which like the majority, is engraved with the ninety-nine names of God, is a handsome marble pillar, four feet high. On this once rested an engraved emerald saucer, which held the Koh-i-nur.

Nowhere in India have I seen a fine staircase. Here, as in all other buildings, common, steep, and narrow stone steps are found, a curious thing, considering the beauty of construction of most mosques.

The earliest inlay work on marble in India is found in the exquisite tomb of the grandfather of the lady of the Taj, Itimad-ud-daulah. The tomb stands in a most lovely garden on the opposite side of the river to the Taj, some two hundred and fifty yards north of the East Indian Railway Bridge. At each corner of this fairy-like creation of cob-webbed marble, stand octagonal

towers forty feet high. On the cenotaphs of Itimad-ud-daulah and his wife, which are exactly over the actual tombs below, and made of yellow marble, quantities of jessamine cover the top, which the attendant gathered in handfuls for us in return for our offering, and we came away inhaling the perfume of the blossom, and watching the day dying in soft, rosy tints, as gently as a flower.

In India little tin boxes with the owner's name painted on them and the words "Not at home" are hung on every front gate. Into these one shoots one's card and thanks God for the simplicity of the visiting convention. Capt. Pollok had kindly given me a letter of introduction to the Commissioner's wife at Agra, and when I presented it I found her out, but an hour later Mrs. Edward's bearer presented a chit from her, asking me to tea on the morrow, and telling me her husband had put me up at the Club. Alas! my train leaves at five. Indian hospitality is so frankly kind, so spontaneous, one is in a perpetual state of feeling grateful.

The Taj one must not see first at high noon. My guide told me that, and created such a feeling of obstinate determination on my part to see why it was withheld till evening, that I can never get the marvellous charm it exerts on the mind of all who behold it first in the softening light of sunset. There is no doubt it is wonderful in formation and majestic in proportion. Each time I saw it I was impressed, but never once did I feel that aching sense, appreciation of great beauty forces upon one: true there was no moon. I had dreamed of

seeing it in the pixies' light, a silvery poem; but always it was a baking hot, sun-reflecting tomb, hard, unresponsive.

The garden restored, or rather demolished to English uniformity, no longer has any Oriental character. Amber with its untouched, almost untended garden, delighted my soul. It was a garden of the East, and as such fulfilled my dreams, making me sense the throb of love and life that existed several hundred years ago.

Whereas the crown lady's tomb, which took nearly twenty-two years to build, and cost nearly two million pounds, does not move me as it should. I climbed to one of the four turrets of the white minarets, picked out with black marble, and gazed at the tomb from an elevation of one hundred and thirty-seven feet. The tomb itself measures one hundred and eighty-six feet on each side, and is perhaps the most beautifully proportioned building of its kind in the world. The pierced marble screens about the cenotaph are exquisite.

Little sugar balls were given us by the attendant in return for baksheesh as we gazed on the delicate tracing of agate and lapis lazuli about the tomb. Austin of Bordeaux probably took part in their decorations, as at that time he was in Akbar's service, finally over the cenotaph hangs a fine Cairene lamp, the gift of Lord Curzon.

Like the globe-trotting American, when asked his opinion of the Taj, I echo the reply, "It's a neat thing in tombs."

DELHI.

CECIL HOTEL,
DELHI.

My ever dear Mother,

Murray's Guide Book gives one 109 things of interest to look at in Delhi, and says that the sights cannot be comfortably seen in less than four or five days. It then proceeds with an itinerary for those who can only spare three days. The brain that can see, assimilate, and retain memory of twenty individual things a day, is one that will be of inestimable pleasure to its possessor. I, alas! have a weaker variety of head, so decided to leave the Guide Book at home, select what appealed to me, and with a native guide and a friend who spoke Hindoostani, go when the spirit moved me to see a few things thoroughly. I was successful in my selection of a guide; he did not produce a book of chits, extolling his excellence in that capacity, which is the tiresome procedure of almost every kind of tradesman in India. If one buys a pot of ink, a pair of shoes, any impersonal item, one is besought to write of its superiority, the honesty of the dealer, and any flowery detail one may see fit to add.

Servants produce most marvellous "chits" or recommendations from late masters, which may be genuine, or, again, may have been purchased from a Baboo in the bazaar. The professional letter writer is

one who does a thriving trade in all parts of India. An example of this kind having come under my notice I append it here. It was an application for employment addressed to the Officer commanding Decli Irregular Forces, and ran as follows:—

"Honored Master! Having heard of your almighty mercy and loving kindness to us worms, I tell you of my circumstances. By grace of God and your Lordship I have seven children, all babes and sucklings. Besides this abominable litter I have many male and female relations. What have I done that I should be blessed with such cursed trials? As your Lordship is my Father and Mother, I would request that you will take this worm and wife and suckles and relations—both male and female—and provide for us from your bounty at a remuneration of R's 20 a month. I cannot read or write, and have only the suckle qualifications, and male relations and feminine, but by the Grace of God and your Lordship, I look forward to years of prosperity and happiness. All the chavin of Decli sing of your praises, your justice and mercy, therefore, call us all that we may fatten on your love and gentleness. Call quickly. Your faithful worm and beast. Meema tal—Despicable brute and unwilling father of babies."

I arrived at Delhi late at night and awoke next morning to the eternal sunshine of December, and hastened to the Mughal Fort and Palace, built between 1638-48, by the Emperor Shah-Jahan.

For the history of Delhi I find no space in this little book, nor of its stirring share in the Mutiny. One long day I gave to the Ridge and all that has to do with the

siege. It was a day of sadness, of introspective emotion, that has no right to grow into narrative beneath my frivolous pen.

The name of Curzon is sounded the moment one enters the Fort by the Delhi Gate, where between the outer gate —which is inferior in every way to the Lahore Gate—and the inner one, stand two huge, black stone elephants, which were restored and presented in place of the original mutilated ones, by the late Viceroy. Pieces of the originals are to be seen in the Fort Museum—a tiny place containing such things as Moguls' silver chairs, a blood-stained coat of General Nicholson's, odd and sundry weapons, and villainous pictures of Delhi Kings and other grandees. To a casual spectator the Delhi Fort has not the pleasure-giving qualities of the one at Agra, nor is it as well kept up. Large spaces of ground, either covered with coarse, long grass, or earth and loose stones, have to be traversed between many of the buildings, and though many barbarous European contrivances to turn stately rooms into partitioned compartments for officers' quarters existed up till a few years ago, I am glad to say they are now being removed.

In one room recently used as the Officers' Mess, adjoining the Diwan-i-am, the floor having been taken up and the rough plaster removed by Lord Curzon's orders, a lovely, creamy, marble basin to a fountain, carved in the form of a gigantic lotus, was revealed. It is at least ten feet in diameter.

The hall of public audience, 100 feet long by 60 feet wide, with its splendid columns and engrailed arches is very fine. It is not difficult to conjure up the beautiful scene it must have presented in the days of Shah

Jehan, when it was covered with brilliant Chunam, which is a design painted on the marble in gorgeous colors and much gold, and populated by the superbly dressed natives, who came to present petitions to the Emperor seated in a recess on the famous peacock throne.

The pietra dura work, so extolled by the guide books, is disappointing if one has gone to India imbued with the idea of their civilisation so ancient and profound when Europeans were savages. 1648 exhibited in Europe far finer inlay-work and carvings than one sees of that date in any part of Delhi. And then the Diwan-i-Khas, or private audience hall, disappointed me, with its tracery of precious stone inlay, so deftly picked away by cute Americans' penknives. It is well their country-woman's dollars have gone to so wisely repair their thoughtless damage. Why anyone wants to destroy a beautiful, graceful design, in an utterly lovely building, by taking away a fragment of lapis lazuli, agate, or discolored turquoise, passes my understanding.

Until guarded by watchmen, however, this was an almost daily occurrence since tourist Americans have been travelling over India.

I could not see that the private audience chamber, even though splendidly proportioned and built of white marble, and at one time bearing a ceiling of silver, could ever have merited the Persian inscription over the two outer arches, which translates into "If Paradise can be on the face of the earth, it is this. Oh, it is this; Oh, it is this; Oh, it is this." Unless perhaps when brilliant with lights and British uniforms, scintillating with flashing jewels and lovely ladies' eyes, one thinks of the ball on January 6th, 1903, in honor of the Coronation

of his late Majesty King Edward VII. Numerous rooms open off one another near this, but they have no artistic value, and the three bath apartments floored with intricate inlay of pietra dura have barbarously been white-washed everywhere. The excuse being that the walls of the King's bath supported paintings of an immoral character.

An old Scotch veteran took us through a massive bronze door into the forty by thirty-five feet courtyard of the Pearl Mosque. This Mosque has three arches over a stage like elevation at the end, and the walls are decorated in low relief. The prayer places under the arches on the platform, which are shaped in outlines of pietra dura work, were recently restored "By order of Lord Curzon" at a cost of something like R's 90 each. The high walls that surround this Moti Masjid threw cooling shadows. Our ancient guide mumbled his guide book lesson, and left us to dream, for here it was peaceful to a degree, until a party of native sightseers from the hills, with the most horrible, old, garrulous guide imaginable, came chattering in and dispelled the charm of the moment of meditation.

So we went on to look at two pavilions called the "Question and Answer." A marble canal leads from one to the other, where sweet-scented water used to flow, starting in "Question," over a cascade wherein colored lights were placed as in the ladies' baths at Agra. Between these pavilions is a huge covered tank, used by the Emperor as a swimming bath. It was all in process of being restored when I was there—a disconcerting element to one who goes to a historic spot to dream of its ancient grandeur.

After bartering for ivory elephants and pearls all one morning, the latter four times Bond Street prices, I came out of the shop to find myself facing the Jama Masjid, a Mohammedan Mosque.

An enormous flight of steps, at least half a street block in length, led up to the gateways. These steps were infested with beggars, whining "Baksheesh, mem sahib, Baksheesh," and displaying their rags, and frequently hideous deformities. In India the unsightly cripple makes his ailment a means of livelihood, which is distressing beyond words to the ordinary mind.

When we reached the massive doors overlaid with brass arabesques half an inch thick, my Hindoo bearer was turned back with scant courtesy. At a recent Mohammedan festival, he tells me, a dead pig was thrown in amongst the devout at prayer. This caused a riot that resulted in bloodshed and disorder, and an ordinance against the admission to this Mosque of any of the accursed race of pig throwers.

We entered the quadrangle 325 feet square and submitted to the tying on of colossal cotton shoes before proceeding. The usual tank is in the centre, where all who come to pray first bathe, cleanse their teeth, arrange their hair, and replace their turbans. It is a mark of great disrespect for a Hindoo or Mohammedan to appear with his head uncovered. There are four towers at each corner; into one I climbed; half way up I met some burly visiting pathans coming down, and the problem of two bodies occupying one space was demonstrated most unpleasantly. However, the top once gained, a superb view of Delhi was my reward. The heat of the noon sun was overpowering, and drove me back to inspect

the mosque, which occupies one end of the quadrangle. It is 200 feet long and 90 feet deep, and surmounted by three domes. As we turned to come out we were besought to look at sacred relics of the prophet. "Koran, Lady, come see Koran from which the Prophet read." We went, but those in charge refused to uncover this holy of holies till Baksheesh had been paid. We presented eight annas, but evidently our appearance in their eyes warranted more. "Ladyship pay more to see these most holy things," the guide whined; but "Ladyship" was tired of importunate Mohammedans, and took her eight annas out of the astonished guide's hand and walked off, leaving the attendants in the barred enclosure with the Koran, to say the least, surprised.

As we climbed into our phaeton gharri, our attention was arrested by some dancing girls, and men beating curious drums like huge hour glasses.

One of these nautch girls was quite beautiful enough to have inspired any of the Eastern love songs heard in English drawing-rooms. She was quite the dirtiest of the lot. Bangles jangled on her ankles above feet which were crusted with the earth she lovingly dug her heels into. Her wondrously adjusted sari covered an untidy head, and all her tawdry draperies were woefully soiled. Her face was lovely and her teeth perfect. The eyes, well blacked with the soot from lamp smoke, were luminous.

This eye-blacking process is indulged in by men, women, and infants. The baboos in Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son's at Bombay—dressed in proper European shirts, collars, ties, and coats, surmounting the native drapery in lieu of trousers, which displays with Scotch impar-

tiality the leg from above the sock to well over the knee—are blacked about the eyes like a Gaiety-chorus girl. The tiny infants of a few months that I saw on the road from Amber, were so blurred about the eyelids I fancied them suffering from some awful ailment. On inquiring of the guide what the black on the children's eyes was caused by, he looked at me pityingly and remarked, loftily, "To make beauty, of course!" From Koran to dancing girl the eight annas went, and the nautch began. The men droning a tune and intermittently hitting the drums, whilst the three women, who might well be grandmother, mother and daughter, lilted the melancholy music and postured in the dust, bending, swirling, gesticulating, and always droning the story the dance was supposed to illustrate. We threw baksheesh and drove off to that kaleidoscopic bazaar, the Chandni Chauk.

Nowhere else in India have I seen such a collection of shops on so broad a thoroughfare. The streets of Jeypore are very wide, but have a deserted air. Down the centre of the Chandni Chauk the pedlars' booths are gay with Indian garments, bangles, and fruit. Sweetmeats and chipatties or native bread food are sold on huge brass trays, supported on little tables ingeniously made of twisted straw. These little straw stands one sees at every Railway Station at which one stops. The vendor of native food or "nice, decent fruit; nice, decent fruit," as one often hears the moral orange and banana called, walks along with a tray heavily ladened on his head, his straw stand under his arm, and later squats on the ground, his wares before him on his impromptu table.

The shops on either side contain merchandise of greater value, and dismounting we climbed a narrow staircase

and found ourselves on a flat roof. At once I sensed a delightful air of mystery in this abode of the famous Delhi gold embroiderer. We walked across the roof to a room where, lying about on the floor, native workers eyed me curiously. This shop opens on to a balcony that overlooks the street. When we were there it supported half a dozen men busy about a coffee-making machine, for it was their hour of tiffin. Cupboards around the walls, glass encased, contained most lovely native garments at fabulous prices. I had come to purchase Indian clothes for my three little pledges of affection in far-away Australia, and found myself parting foolishly with money for tiny green satin, sapphire velvet, and red coats, that I'd refused for carved ivories earlier in the day; but whenever was sentiment light on the pocket?

It was in this shop Lady Curzon's wondrous Durbar peacock dress was worked, and though the gold and silver is massively applied, the designs strike me as stiff and inartistic, in all this vaunted Delhi metal embroidery.

Driving home through the garden, at St. James' Church I got out and went in to see the memorial tablets and say a little prayer. There is something so tear-compelling about the simplicity of the inscriptions on the walls and in front of the altar, of the dear, brave men whose blood has soaked the Indian soil that England might be supreme. As a mother, I prayed that if necessary my son may follow in the footsteps of these calm heroes, whose lives have so gallantly been offered up on the altar of patriotism.

Let me warn you, dear Mummy and all who intend to do Indrapat, that if you mean to go for data notebook

in hand, to mark and to report on the length and breadth of this ruined Delhi, you must start early and stay all day, with tiffin basket much in evidence.

For the dreamer like myself, to whom India is but a series of lovely pictures, let him choose the late afternoon, clad in thinnest clothes, with a heavy coat and fur rug for the return drive after sundown. All these so-called deserted cities are inhabited by a population that would be called a thriving village in barren Australia. As we crossed the bridge, having just left our gharri, a nice little boy, perhaps twelve years old, offered his services as guide. We took him and his several companions as far as the gate, where fortunately the latter left us to explore the ruined city, with only the faint echo of their voices at a pleasant distance from our ears.

We poked about in erstwhile palace and mosque. In the latter I climbed steep steps after my little guide, who had an adorable appreciation of views—and silence. He spoke only Hindoostani, and discreetly little of that. I never enjoyed any sight seeing in Indian ruins so much as that evening of rose and gold in dead Indrapat. Till the man who accompanied me grew restless, I sat in a cloistered tower of the mosque dreaming of Humayan, who died in 1550, of the Court that then held sway. No doubt the Emperor wore the ridiculous fitting trousers and coats of the high-class native of to-day, that always so offend my sense of niceness. Dreaming myself into an indolent woman of that time I know no other cut, so I am blissfully unconscious of the excellence of English Sahibs' clothes, and their comforting influence. On the way back, by a series of hideous scum-covered pools, in which natives bathe, we got out to see

the spot on the rampart wall where Brigadier General John Nicholson, who led the assault of Delhi, fell in the hour of victory on September 23rd. My mind will conjure up that picture at twilight on every anniversary, as it is the eve of little Beatrice's birthday, and will serve to remind me always of a pathetic event of the great Mutiny of 1857.

There are twelve or more ancient Delhis, and to-day undoubtedly the most interesting is eleven miles from the modern city. All along the road, one passes ruins of mosque and court, that would command exhaustive investigation were one not impatiently waiting to see the great mosque of Kuwat-ud-Islam and the Kutub Minar. The picture of the latter fails to convey the impressiveness of this wondrous piece of stone work. It is 238 feet high, and rises slightly out of plumb in the first storey, to an erect elevation of five stories, marked by corbelled balconies, and decorated with dadoes of inscription. The base diameter is over forty-seven feet and the top nine feet. The lowest great band of text inscription is extremely beautiful; the three first storeys are of red sandstone, the two upper faced with white marble. A gallery of ninety-five feet above the ground gives a fine view, but it is from the summit, after climbing 379 steps, one gets an adequate reward for one's effort. A story is told there by the guide to this effect. The Begum of Altamsh, being a devout woman, desired to gaze daily upon the sacred Jumna; to do this many slaves were required to carry her to the River. Altamsh then conceived the idea of heightening the Kutub, so that his Begum might gaze daily upon her beloved Jumna.

without leaving the City, and accordingly raised it to its present elevation.

The tomb of Altamsh, who perished in 1235 A.D., is built of red sandstone. It is primarily interesting as being the oldest tomb known to exist in India. The interior, which is like a large room, is almost completely covered with beautiful carving, and finely cut inscriptions of passages from the Koran. At present it is open to the sky.

The iron pillar here is one of the most interesting curiosities in India, rising 23 feet 8 inches above the ground, and recording its history by a deeply cut Sanscrit inscription on its west face. The third century A.D. has been assigned as its date by the translator. From the hot sun that beat mercilessly upon us, as we stood gazing at this solid shaft 16 inches in diameter, we sought shelter in the cloisters running around from both sides of the gate.

These cloisters are supported by Jain pillars, which, though originally carved beautifully with replicas of human and animal figures, have, in almost every instance, been mutilated by the Mohammedans, who allow no image of man or beast to be made.

The Arabic inscription over the Eastern gate says that 27 idolatrous temples were demolished to provide this material. The whole history of Indian palaces and mosques teems with deeds of loot; is it, therefore, any wonder the native appropriates anything not nailed down, since the right of might is the law of Kings. As a tourist in hotels, as a guest in bungalows for three months, I never lost one article by theft. During no

The Tomb of Altamsh—Delhi.

similar period in European travel have I ever known a tourist escape despoiling.

Five miles along a road of beauty and variety of views, we motored to Tughlakabad. For some distance before we arrived the crest of the fort was seen. The city is enclosed by a wall or erstwhile rampart of nearly four miles in circuit, built of such massive stones that it is supposed they were quarried on the spot, the largest weighing about six tons. The city had thirteen gates, through walls 45 feet high, with parapets and inner walls taking the whole to an elevation of 62 feet. Ruins of palace and mosque abound, domed, separate rooms, and dark passages leading to outer walls. It is a dream place to explore. There are no beauties to delight the eye, but a thousand things to excite the imagination, for it is the ruin of a stern giant, massive and grand. The ruined walls of Jama Masjid are inhabited by a small Guyar colony. It is impressively desolate, having been cursed by the Nizam-ud-din Aulia in the words, "May it be inhabited by Guyars, or may it remain desolate." The tomb of Tuglak Shah forcibly suggests Egypt, with its flat and sloping walls. It is in the midst of an artificial lake, surrounded by a pentagonal outwork. The outside of the tomb is decorated by bands of white marble, set in red sandstone, and is surmounted by a marble dome. Three lofty archways form entrances on three of its four sides, and inside are three cenotaphs, said to be those of Tuglak Shah, his Queen, and their son, Khuni Sultan, "the bloody King." The warning of "plenty snakes here," made exploring a mixed joy. So with the story ringing in my ears of Feroz Shah, the humane, who succeeded bloody Khuni, and purchased

acquittances from all those whom his predecessor had wronged, and put them in a chest at the head of his tomb, that he might present them when called to judgment, I retraced my steps, inhaling the perfume of the tiny jessamine flowers, the attendant took from a Begum's tomb, in return for our offering. The motor speedily bore us to a more inspiriting scene—a collection of lovely tombs, enhanced by splendid trees and plateaus of grass are those by the fine mosque of red sandstone of Jamud Khana, and the rest house built by Emperor Aurangzeb. Here also is the simple grave of that poetess, Jahanara Begum, sister of the Emperor, who desired only the covering of soft, green grass open to the face of the sky as her tomb. Beside this are the tombs of Muhammud Shah, 1719-1748, and Prince Jahangir, Akbar's son. These have elaborately carved marble doors in the screen-like archways of beautifully pierced marble that enclose the tombs, and near by is the tomb of Amir Khussan, a famous poet. Seated all about this tomb were students copying out his writing, their quaint Eastern raiment making a splendid splash of color, in the dim light of the grave chamber surrounded by two galleries. The walls of the tomb are inscribed with an epitaph to this now silent "sweet-tongued parrot," and a pathway through small shrines takes us upon the wondrous sight of a huge tank of deep, translucent, green water, on two sides of which are covered balconies about 8 feet wide. A platform at one end descends in a flight of ghaut steps to the pool, and on the fourth side is a high, stone wall, with bronze domes glistening in the sun, and backed by luxuriant, large-leafed trees.

Various men were bathing as we entered an aperture opening to the stone platform, and a superbly proportioned young man asked if we cared to see him do a high dive. We assented readily, and at his suggestion entered the balcony and walked to the junction of the two covered cloisters from whence we watched him, brown, lithe, and beautiful, run lightly along the top of the wall, spring upon a bronze dome, poise for a moment like a bird, then dart into the cool, green, placid pool, emerging shortly and running breathlessly to where we stood, salaaming for his pay. We gave it most willingly, and watched a second plunge before visiting the white marble Tomb of the Saint—he of the traditional quarrel with the Emperor Tughlak Shah.

This tomb is 18 feet square, and surrounded by a wide platform. Around the grave is a low marble rail, and over it is a canopy, inlaid solidly with mother-of-pearl. In the walls are the pierced, marble screens seen in such perfection in so many parts of India.

The story of the quarrel between this Saint (who died in 1324, at the age of 92) and the King, has been told thus:—"The Emperor requisitioned the workmen on the tank for labour on his fortress at Tughlakabad, and that when the Saint arranged to carry on his work at night, the Emperor forbade the sale of oil to him; thereupon the water of the tank miraculously served as oil, and was duly cursed by the incensed King, in return for which the Saint cursed Tughlakabad."

Be the cause what it may have been, there can be no reasonable doubt that Nizam-ud-din was concerned with Ala-ud-din in the plot against the Emperor, and the say-

ing with which he comforted his disciples when told that the King was returning to punish him, and, indeed, was only a few miles distant, was "Dilli harrog dur ast" —Delhi is still far off.

Native Spinner—Allahabad Exhibition.

Woman grinding Corn.

ALLAHABAD.

VISITORS' CAMP,
ALLAHABAD.

Veronica dearest,—

I have been in this country over a month, but have had no hour for you till now. I arrived here at broiling noon, jogging in a thing built for the very slim, but often crowded with fat natives—a closed conveyance, that always takes away my last shred of good temper, and which landed me at the visitors' camp, which is a long way from the station. The camp is a curious collection of newly-blocked streets, alphabetically named, and covered with tents. Hannah got down at the Camp Inspector's tent, to enquire where we were to go. I waited. She returned, "Mr. Lawson will see you, Madam." I got out with alacrity, prepared for war.

I sensed that they'd never heard of me despite my letters and telegrams to the Superintendent or Manager, or whoever Mr. Murray was, is, or ought to be.

A soft voice, bidding me come in, stemmed my fast approaching wrath, and there at the table, piled with correspondence, the telephone ringing incessantly, sat the saddest-faced man I've ever seen. He listened courteously, and conducted us to a tent, advising me to have my maid sleep with me.

So, if you please, we were housed under canvas with narrow camp beds, a tiny table with a looking glass that libelled you to look in, and a single chair.

One lone electric bulb was suspended from a string about the tent pole, like the head of the serpent on the tree in Eden, that fateful tree of good and evil. Behind is a tiny tent for bath and dressing-room. The wash-hand-stand, an iron tripod affair. The canvas roof so low you crick your neck whilst you bathe. But, oh! my darling girl! the moment of delight is when you sit in your bath. Whilst you dally with your toe end, the mosquitoes lovingly bite their monograms on your back. When you splash the water there, they light on your knees, which the proportion of your bath makes necessary to tuck under your chin. Then you rise up, forgetting the roof, only to get a spank from the sandy canvas, for sand is everywhere, since your tent is on a glorified ant-heap.

After tiffin in a barn-like building, I got a tonga, the rudest form of wooden cart, and sitting behind a native driver, bumped into Government House to see Mrs. Hore-Ruthven, who is laid up there with a sore throat. Heavens! the relief to get somewhere dark and cool. I stayed all afternoon, and Lady Hewitt came in and gave us tea at five.

On my return here, I took a rickshaw round the United Provinces Exhibition. It's just a stone's throw from my tent, with a polo ground beside it. It's the usual type of Exhibition building, and at sundown is lit up with the eternal rows of electric lights and fireworks, with which the native so loves blasting the peaceful evening.

Inside, suburban India was riotously gay about the restaurant, drinking tea or milk punch, a liquor like sweetened sherry and quinine, supposed to avert the evening chill. There was an undercurrent murmur of voices in the hushed, nervous tones heard at a large church wedding, and a band played, but no one looked cheery and gay, no one laughed, no one lounged. They sat decorously, satisfied to be doing something unusual—the dear, calm British nation! I returned to my tent, dined in splendid solitude, and went to bed bored with everything.

Next day I did the fort, which has been held by the British since 1798, and was founded by Abkar 1575 A.D. It interested me chiefly because, from one point outside its ramparts you see the union of the Ganges and the Jumna. In the one are natives bathing as a sacred rite, whilst the crocodile sports below in the other waiting for human tit-bits. Cheerful country!

The temple in the underground part of the fort is abominable. Hindoo gods are carved in the stone walls and smudged with vermilion, orange-coloured flowers piled in front of each, and a sense of dampness and slime pervading it all.

The chief work is a stone or block of iron, that looks like a buffalo hump. This is supposed to be an undecaying banyan tree. The native guide, seeing my apparent disappointment in these holy surroundings, and, wishing to excite my interest, told me a holy man once struck the tree with his sword, and that milk flowed from one side, whilst blood ran from the other. "A useful man to have about in siege times," I remarked.

There is a King's apartment in this fort, fast crumbling to decay. The "Tommy" entrusted to escort me said he had no idea such a place was there, so evidently many people do not pry beyond the Asoka pillar, which rises 49 feet 5 inches above the ground. Edicts of Circa, 240 B.C., are inscribed on it, and also a record of Samundra Guptas' victories in the second century, and one by Jahangir to commemorate his accession to the throne. How much more enduring than our modern newspaper accounts.

I left the courtyard with its ancient pillar and went to the racecourse; it is the dearest little garden, with such a tiny stand facing the length of the course, which is also very small. On a railed platform, comfy wicker chairs, and tables for tea were set out under the shade of the trees amongst the inevitable tubs of palms.

The officers of a regiment were at home, which means free tea to the assembled populace. I arrived with the grim determination to say good-bye and dash off to Benares; but fate made me powerless. Fate that always steps in with a new emotion just when life threatens to become vegetable. I sent my tonga off, and General Mahon took me to the Club in Captain Barrett's car. Or did I go with Captain Barrett, the A.D.C., in General Mahon's car? I shall never solve the mystery of that car's owner.

Anyway, I went to the Allahabad Club, and into the pretty ballroom, whose floor is sunk a foot below the level of the space outside the doric pillars that enclose the dancing surface. I sat in a deep rosy chintz-covered lounge, under softly shaded lamps, sipped a milk punch, and allowed myself to be persuaded to remain

over at least one night for the dance at the Club, which in turn brought Captain Plant as a partner, who is in charge of the Maharajah of Benares' son, and I'm to be put up at the guest house when I go there, which now will not be till after New Year.

I wish I could tell you adequately about the polo next day. Kishingar's gorgeous turbaned team, with 70 ponies to choose from, made the galloping furious. Whirlwinds of dust everywhere below, feminine flutter in the stand and vice-regal enclosure, and Oh! delicious gossip! Veronica, the world is just the same on these burning plains of India as in a Canadian village. The petty in spirit dominating where it can, the mighty in birth snubbing the upstart when necessary.

To-day the Burra mem sahib has been pleased to get angry with her guests for beginning breakfast without her, and has been nicely reproved by the daughter of a peer. I'm so glad I stayed. One sometimes tries to feel there are finer, bigger, better people than one knows oneself to be, and it's so depressing to be self-effacing. To-day I feel just a little nicer and more amiable than some of these dear ladies.

I took two men to lunch in my barn—they were such cheery dears, and in the afternoon I met some people whom I feel will materially add to my pleasures in India. I dined *tout seul* with one of the polo players; such an interesting man! and did the art exhibits with him later on. But inferior lacquer after Japanese fine product, and crude silver and embroideries left me unmoved, and I thought the native women's exhibit pathetic. Long have I heard of fine Indian muslin and of the embroidery

thereon. My dear, stick to your French convent embroidery and English mull for fine texture.

More polo next morning, then a *tete a tete* lunch with a boy who says he is 30. He looks 22. I feel like his maiden aunt, is it a safe sensation? More races afterwards, and then a dash to the Club in the cold, for it grows curiously chilly here at sundown, in the car of two owners. We stopped at General Kerrs to get a wrap, and decided to let the chauffeur drive, as three in the back seat are productive of warmth. I wound my feather boa around each man, when crash! bang! Entering the Club grounds by the "out" gate, we collided with a four-in-hand. With splendid presence of mind we three sat dumb, whilst the chauffeur, smashing over a bicycle—the bicycle that stands at every Club door in India, with the palm of the community—we dashed out the "In" gate to the dark road beyond.

I then untangled the boa. We returned by the ladies' entrance, and whilst the General and I had milk punch, his A.D.C. mingled his commiseration with the owner of the broken bicycle. "Did you get the number of the car?" he inquired. The man had not. "Well, surely you saw the colour?" Another negative. "Who was sitting in it?" This was really a brave question, but fate is smiling on me. The owner of the "bike" did not know.

Each night, at 8 p.m., there is an old custom here in the houses of the native princes. A piper stands on the top of the palace gates and pipes to let the faithful subjects know their King is doing his best to increase his family. The managers of the Exhibition being unconscious of this custom, I presume, but wishing the

native as well as the European to have the music of his country, elected to place a piper on the entrance gate.

I dined at the Exhibition my last night in Allahabad, and as I left for the train, the native piper's weird strains came plaintively on the breeze, as he tramped about on the arch over the manager's office.

I am finishing this letter in Calcutta. Next day we had lunch served so quaintly on the train. Our section was like a small room. There was a door on each side next to a partition, which shut off our bath-room. In front of the three windows on either side of the car adjoining the doors, were the long leather seats whereon one sleeps at night. As one takes great rolls of bedding, pillows, and a steamer trunk, and hat box into the carriage one is quite comfortable, as there is plenty of light, and two electric fans.

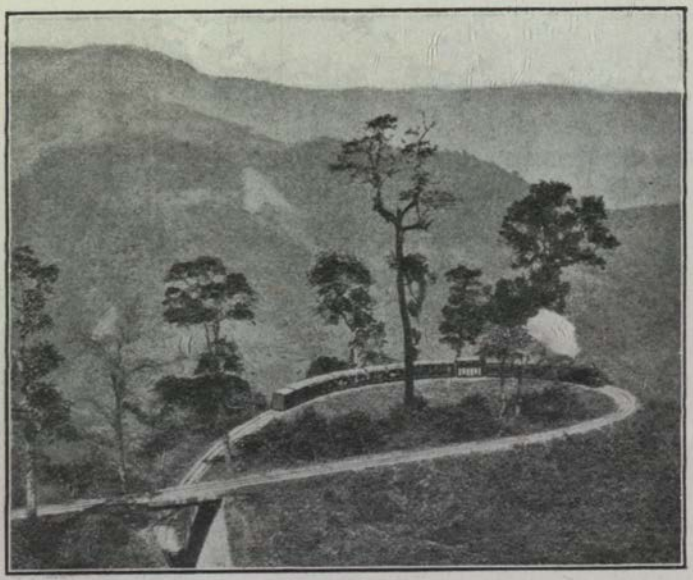
At one station where we paused the usual ten or twelve minutes, two bare-footed attendants came into our car dressed in white trousers, with long green serge frock-like coats, fastened to the chin with brass buttons. Broad belts of three cords of twisted red and gold cloth were around their waists, and high, white glazed hats fitting tightly to their heads, and slanting to a somewhat larger crown, surrounded at the top with a twist of the red and gold cord, which was drawn down to the edge of the head in the centre in front with a brass brooch, the trade mark of the railway caterer.

They bore trays of spoons, forks, napkins, etc., and whilst we were at the station, soup and fish were quickly served beside us where we sat. As we pulled out of the station, huge piles of dishes tied up in white cotton cloths were put in our carriage, and one attendant

travelled with us to the next station, serving three meat courses. One with fresh salad, which I forbade Hannah to eat, followed by stewed guavas and a Welsh rabbit, all perfectly hot.

With no unnecessary noise, our bearded Mohammedan Khidmutgar gathered the plates together, tied up the corners of the cotton cloth, and having collected two shillings for each person's lunch, salaamed, and stepped off the train when it stopped, with his dishes and empty soda water bottles.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY



On the Line to Darjeeling.

DARJEELING.

CALCUTTA,
DEC. 15th, 1910.

Olive dear,—

Here in this East you have so delightfully expressed, I am constantly thinking of you, but life is so beautiful these days I have little time to write. Just doing the things one wants to, out of the choice of what can be done, and sometimes doing the thing one longs to do as I am going to tell you of in this letter, and in visiting those places one has dreamed about.

Canadian-born, the snows have always called to me. I don't want them intimately. I have no desire to battle with their force. But always are they alluring when their coldness does not reach me. So I started off alone with my bearer one afternoon about 5.30 from Calcutta, with a great joy in my heart, and, as the comfortable vestibule carriage on the train bore me past the luxuriant green-robed gardens of suburban Calcutta, with their ponds and palms, and their creaking bamboo, I felt no desire to read my books or magazines. Life without was a panorama of splendour that my aching eyes clung to, till night veiled it all in silent mystery.

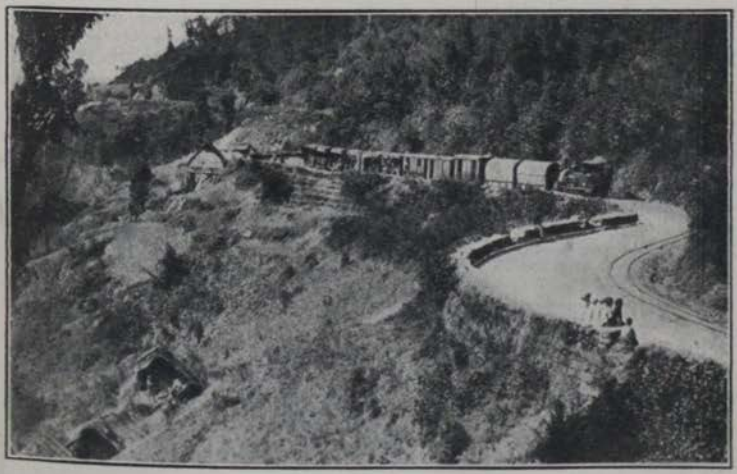
We reached Damudkia about nine o'clock. The noisy, bustling coolies pushed and jostled in human waves, and led us down an inclined mud bank to the flat-bottomed

steam ferry—a fine big boat, with dressing-room and bath-room, with porcelain tubs and plenty of mirrors. No need to wear one's hat crooked when travelling in India. On the upper deck in the caressing night air I dined. A soft moon, in a vapourous mist shone fitfully on the river, which scintillated under the steamer's beacon as we plodded slowly up the thirteen miles to the Sara Ghaut landing on the other side, where the train was waiting, and I was soon asleep on my way to Silliguri. When I awoke the next morning early, there on the right, far beyond, were the rose-tinted snow peaks of the Kinchinjanga Range. It was my first glimpse of snow in India, and a charming emotion. After breakfast at Silliguri, I got into the most delightful railway carriage I have ever seen running on a two-feet gauge. The cars were a series of open boxes not unlike a motor or a tram, with three seats facing three others, a roof, but no sides, and so low one had scarcely to raise one's foot to enter.

Enveloped in a sealskin coat, and my feet tucked up in a fur rug, I was prepared for the cold. Yet a little girl sat between me and her father, and did crochet work with bare hands all the way up.

Winding along most lovely roads, we started off slowly. We went little over eight miles an hour, but ascended a thousand feet in each. About seven miles from Silliguri we began the climb, twisting and turning on to a fresh view of surpassing loveliness every few minutes. Great trees towered above, and the undergrowth of tree ferns and shrubs in the ravines was most graceful and lovely. About 17 miles along one does an extraordinary loop, of which I send a picture, and the road grows

Mongolian-looking Hindoos at Darjeeling.



On the Road to Darjeeling.

narrower and narrower. One has no sense of being on a railway; it's the exact sensation of motoring, helter-skelter along a road.

The native changes materially as we ascend, and becomes a distinctly flat-nosed, almond-eyed Mongolian in type. Though his forehead is plastered with Hindoo caste marks, his hair is worn in a pigtail, and surmounted with a Tibetan hat. The women, too, wear different garments to their sisters in the plains. Greasy cotton bands bind their brows, sewn with crude turquoise. Great metal ear-rings, a blur of blue turquoise or copper ore, I do not know which. Huge necklaces, barbaric and clumsy, but intensely attractive, hang on their chests, and their hands are covered with silver rings set with turquoise and pink tourmalines.

As we mounted to colder regions, bare feet and sandals gave way to thick-soled, felt Chinese boots, and as trees and ferns faded from the landscape below, the hills blossomed with the stunted tea shrub, set in mathematical rows, and made picturesque by the cinnamon-brown and claret-coloured draperies of the native girl gardeners.

It was a sunny day of exquisite clearness that Fate granted me to make this trip, and having reached a cold elevation of 7,000 feet, we began to descend to Darjeeling, which is 6,000 feet, and the view of the highest mountains in the world gradually revealed themselves. I was thankful the train was almost empty, and the other travellers as speechless as myself—indiscriminate words would have killed my joy of Kinchinjanga, forty-five

miles away in reality, but seemingly close enough to embrace. They are 28,156 feet high. Think of it—five and a half miles up in the air!

Arriving at lunch time, I was intensely disappointed in the type of cottages built in this splendid spot. I'd hoped for Swiss chalets, or Indian bungalows. Not a bit of it! Horrid pretentious English or American suburban villas are everywhere in this king of mountain places.

I got a rickshaw, not at all the Japanese or Cingalese variety, but with a centre shaft and cross beam. At the end of the shaft, five-foot length, the coolies stood on each side, and two pushed behind, and with many grunts and groans we mounted to Woodlands Hotel.

Here the itinerant vendor has many pieces of Tibetan brass and copper ware and crude embroideries, spread for sale on the verandah. I spent an hour haggling for brass, watching constantly the ever-changing shadows on my beloved hills, for I was rushing this into one day, as fortune had given me a clear view. After lunch I took my rickshaw and had the runners fill in the time till my train left, pulling me about. How you would have revelled in it, and at sunset as the train (this time a closed-in affair, like a third-class English carriage, with hot water foot-warmers), bore me away, the cold peaks over the trees as we descended seemed to stand like steel-coated sentinels to guard the land. I dined at Silliguri railway station before going to sleep on the other bumpy train, which almost jolted me on to the floor twice. Then the joy of crossing the Ganges, breakfasting on the boat, and regaining my comfortable Calcutta train, and reading in the morning paper of the

10th Hussars victory at Allahabad yesterday. I don't know why I was cheered by that fact, but it certainly started the day pleasantly, and when at noon I got into steamy, hot Calcutta, I rushed away to my hotel to change for the races, absolutely happy and well rewarded for my journey of 500 miles to get a sight of the snow.

CALCUTTA.

GRAND HOTEL,
CALCUTTA.

My dear Patsy,—

No one who has not approached Calcutta by daylight from the Central Provinces can have any idea of the entrancing beauty its outskirts present to eyes used to Australian country. The myriad little lakes, like a disjointed canal on either side of the railway, fringed with the most luxuriant growths of bamboo, palm, and flowering shrubs, present a view hard to equal in fertile loveliness.

Behind these ponds are compounds, and one gets every little while a glimpse of charming bungalows. Often a huge pond in the garden has a stone coping, and a landing with a few steps into the water. Sometimes a stone path leads into the middle of the miniature lake, and a square platform provides space for evening rests and meditation, taking the air when the sun has gone down is a popular pastime in the land of days of passionate heat. We arrived on Sunday at Howrah, and the drive to the hotel entailed crossing the bridge over the Hugli, a river of commerce, pleasure, and mystery. On through the solid old shipping quarter, one might fancy himself in London, till one gets to old Court House Street, and passes Government House, and comes on

those great lungs of this gracious city, the Maidan. Acres and acres of level grass, with tree-embowered plateaus, for tennis, for cricket, or morning gallops. They trail away to the polo ground and racecourse. One need hardly put one's horses feet on the road for several miles. The mail that awaited me included a card from which nodded a red-capped folly head, and I read that "The Unceremonials" were "at home" the following night at 12 Russell Street, and to me an alluring word "Dancing" was in the corner.

I accepted with alacrity, for had I not heard of the Golightly Club, where thirty-five or thirty-six delightful men make happy all those who are fortunate enough to be entertained within the cheery hospitable house known as "Golightly." "Champagne Charlie" is here, and next day I motored with him to the Zoo., a most attractive and beautifully laid out garden. My escort was particularly attracted by a black, silky-haired monkey, whom he tried to tease into action by poking his cane between the bars of the monkey's cage, which was also protected by wire-netting about three feet up from the floor. The beast receded to the back wall of the cage, and kept glowering but motionless.

I was wearing a charming and most expensive hat with garniture of huge velvet poppies and upstanding, pale gray grasses. Whether it was the cane or my red flowers that created the frenzy in the monkey, I shall never know. All I can say is, I suddenly felt myself being scalped, for Mr. Monkey had made one bound forward, and with terrific strength, wrenched the grass from off my hat, which was so firmly pinned to my hair, that a large quantity was forcibly pulled out by the

roots. My crowning sorrow was that though I knew my hat to be ruined, my cheery escort affirmed he could not see that it looked other than "all right," that vague term men so often apply to our costumes when we long for analytical praise.

I was bidden to dine at "Golightly" by the Hon. Mr. Grahame, one of the two resident members, and found my way upstairs behind the bearer, who deposited me at the drawing-room unannounced; this, of course, because he spoke no English.

It is a thing that takes one used to hearing his name pronounced on entering a room, a little time to get used to—the finding of one's host or hostess, to whom one is perhaps a stranger and unknown quantity behind a letter of introduction. We dined delightfully—Col. Bythal, Col. Apostolides, a Greco-Indian, and Miss Grahame—on the wide, cool balcony. My cheery host, when we descended to the ballroom, proceeded to find me enough partners to completely fill my dancing programme before the first note of music. How many of us take that amount of trouble for visiting strangers? Result, an evening of unalloyed pleasure that was but the index to the three weeks that followed.

Invitations came fast on top of my letters of introduction which I presented next day, when I also left cards first on the people who had been written to about me—a custom that obtains all over India. I felt that if I was to see Dargeeling, I must go at once. So, after seeing my first polo in Calcutta on Wednesday, and motoring home past Eden Park, where hundreds of smart equipages were drawn up in the pale, evening light, to listen to a band that plays remarkably well, I waved my hand to

Calcutta till Saturday, when I returned for the races, and was looked after most kindly by my acquaintances, dating only from Monday night.

I sat in three different boxes, had tea on the lawn with one party, and left the races with still another, who took me to the Saturday Night Club, a delightful house tucked into a quiet side street, back of Chowringhe, the principal thoroughfare.

Here are large rooms with comfy chairs, and a library where either one can read or obtain books for home perusal, and as we walked through, we came to a large ball-room, then half-carpeted and furnished with a brilliant array of charming men and girls in lovely race frocks, drinking tea. Whilst behind a row of palms that cut the room in half, the forms of dancers in hats, could be seen moving to the strains of an invisible band. This was my first experience of afternoon dancing, which I found a custom in many places during winter in India.

I returned to my hotel for dinner, and later, very much later, about 10 p.m., in fact, was taken to a performance of the Follies. Dinner in India is always late, and the theatres do not attempt to run in opposition to it.

This particular building is rather on the French principle in construction, the first balcony being a series of boxes, but, unlike the French theatres, entirely open and uncurtained. Had my companion not been one of the most interesting men in Calcutta, I would have been bored to tears by the performance, which I could not sit out after half-past twelve, when it still seemed to be far from the end.

During the next two days I danced again at Golightly. This time after a big dinner there, in the ball-room and club dining-room, which were quickly cleared once the meal was over.

The next day we had the opening polo match, and I went to Tollygunge for the first time.

This most attractively-situated golf course, where also one gets day pigeon shooting and mild croquet, is about five miles from town. Under spreading trees, amongst delightful people, tea on the lawn becomes an enchantment hard to tear one's self away from. On the night of my first visit the new Viceroy was holding his premier drawing-room. True, it was to be half-mourning, which would rob it of some of its brilliancy, but one hoped for the best and returned to town for that most essential half-hour's rest before dinner, that if taken keeps women able to fulfil all the social round, and retain the English woman's accredited appearance of fitness.

At nine-thirty p.m. we arrived at the gates of Government House to find the traffic controlled by English-speaking soldiers—such a relief—and my taxi- throttled down to evil-smelling snorts as we got into line. In the cloak room the usual scrimmage obtained, and I was amused to see how real the three-guinea cotton bouquets, that appeared so artificial in the milliner's shops, looked at night, with their fresh ferns and trails of asparagus greenery.

These bouquets are imperative, as in this climate natural flowers would fade long before the evening was over.

There are so few ladies of private entree privilege that we all squashed gaily on. A murmur that "Her Excellency has fever and will not appear" was breathed about.

A few fervent remarks of "Thank goodness only one curtsey" were heard from those who take the drawing-room much as a child regards a trip to the dentist, an evil essential for future well-being. We found ourselves pushed upstairs to where a series of palm pens were arranged to separate us in twenties on the way to the throne room. At each pen splendid natives from the scarlet-coated guard of honor, in striped turban, shining knee boots, and white gloves of mammoth proportion, held the red ropes that kept us in little impatient lots.

Evening dress and an optional bouquet alone are required for presentation to the King's representative in India; but some ladies had adorned themselves in court trains, feathers and straggling tulle. An old darling preceded me in this attire, and was disturbed to find no one to spread out her finery at the throne room door. I had a bouquet and the tail of my frock, and only two hands, but at least I did not crowd upon her. Indignant and very red, she advanced as her name was shrieked for the first time, on she went, looking neither to right nor to left, straight past His Excellency, past all the lorgnette-framed eyes of those who preceded her, on to the exit without bow or bend; and yet we had heard her complaints of how differently it was all done at home.

Another amusing lady, who apparently had not heard of Her Excellency's indisposition, having made her first bob, and seeing no one beside the Viceroy, moved three steps backward in front of the private entree ladies, and, fixing on the Bishop's wife as the most likely, solemnly curtsied to her before passing on.

Upstairs again to the ballroom, thronged with brilliant uniforms and the most unique form of half-mourning I have ever seen. Glittering silver sequin robes, white and gold dresses, black and gold, and one bright green satin veiled in gray chiffon; with red bouquets and pink bouquets. The heroic attempt at the mauves, white and blacks, and gray frocks to adhere to the Court regulation of half-mourning were almost lost sight of. When the presentations were over, Miss Sanford, Lady Hardinge's cousin, accompanied the Viceroy, who was followed by his staff, and walked in procession through the rooms, and by eleven the drawing-room of 1910 was over, and both the lights and guests going out.

Along the road to Tollygunge—what pictures that sentence conjures in my brain. Soft green trees melting into sky, native mud houses with thatched roofs, and windows formed of osier twigs crossed in the open spaces. Tiny temples on the sickly stream, but teeming with native individuality. Smooth roads and the sense of joyous anticipation of pleasure that must pervade anyone who has had the least experience of Calcutta hospitality, that wonderful open-handed big-heartedness that gives you of its best with a hearty welcome.

It was Boxing Day, 1910, and there was a Horse Show on the Tollygunge course, which, in itself, is a perfect picture. A forest of bamboo at the far end makes a delightful arbor, where late in the afternoon we assembled for tea. At first it was cool, shady, and most alluring. The stretch of green sward everywhere that forms the golf links, the clusters of trees, beautifully symmetrical and luxuriant in foliage, and the Club

House itself, all make a perfect composition. On Boxing Day, it was gay with bunting, festooned from tall bamboo poles, which do duty as Venetian masts. In front of the tent His Excellency the Viceroy sat to view the jumping contest, which was over two cane hedges, a fixed clay jump with loose blocks, and a water jump. Tents off amongst trees on the opposite side of the Vice-Regal enclosure formed Secretary's Offices, for the tent is used for many things in this adaptable clime. Huge pavilions of canvas farther off covered the luncheon tables.

Next day all was cleared away, and the landscape beautiful and unmarred. This, of course, is only possible in a dense population of low-wage workers.

Everywhere on seats placed casually outside the Exhibition rings, three in number, sat pretty ladies and their escorts. Women, business-like in habits, walked about with male competitors, all joyous, hopeful of winning, but absolutely glad to be doing it whether a prize winner or otherwise.

We sat to watch the various events—Ladies' Hacks, Arabs, Chargers, Tandems, and Pairs in the types of vehicle driven here, the Tum-Tum, a deep-seated, covered sulky, smart in outline, with a disc of iron projecting behind on which the native syce sits, his legs locked under the body of the carriage, and holding on by his hands to a strap at the back of the hood. Sometimes he stands erect on his tiny iron platform, but always he is a picturesque adjunct to the turnout.

We lunched merrily at the table of the Commander-in-Chief's staff after the polo ponies had been judged, and returned to see the Viceroy arrive for the jumping

and parade of prize winners. The sun sank, melting the sky with the glorious haze so peculiar to India. The prizes were distributed, and we sauntered after tea in the bamboo grove to our motor, and left lovely Tollygunge in the embrace of a dying day.

On the west bank of the Hugli lies one of the loveliest of park-like gardens, stretching along the banks for 100 acres. Avenues of almond trees, with little ponds nestling by their sides, fringed with bamboo; lanes of palms and baby forests of mahogany everywhere enchant the eye. Huge, kraal-shaped houses, with fibre roofs, over which flowering vines clamber, are filled with graceful ferns of all descriptions and exotic plants. It is an afternoon of fragrant memories to me.

The huge banyan tree that covers a circumference of 1,000 feet, and has 250 aerial roots, is filled with possibilities for the monkey-like young, to swing from branch to branch, or nestle with a book and apple in some secluded corner of its generous shade.

Long sloping green lawns, ideal for polo grounds, with landscape garden views, that delight one under the lengthening shadows cast by the setting sun. I was loath to return to the motor, but even in departing, the view on the Hugli charms one in its mystery of life and coloring. Were it not for the factory chimneys on the opposite bank, one might easily, with wide open eyes believe oneself living countless ages ago. The life on the sampan and the other river boats, with the native in his costume unchanged in style for at least 500 years, transports one's imagination easily to existences long since dead.

Racing in Calcutta is accomplished with the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of fatigue. The paddock is close behind the splendid grand-stand, and the betting ring on one side of it, and the members' tea enclosure directly behind. The clerks of the course have a charming vine-embowered summer-house, where I was taken to tea with some friends, who were Sir Allen Arthur's guests. Everyone is so tremendously gracious and hospitable, one never feels an intruder.

With greatest excitement I awaited the Viceroy's arrival on Cup Day. Out over the polo ground one sees spires in the trees fringing the distant Maidan against a cloudless sky. The centre of the course thronged with gaily-dressed natives in turbans of all colors. In the stand smart ladies and men in topees, which, to me, rob them of a distinctive appearance in smart gatherings. Since women appear in sunstroke enticing head covering, and don't succumb, one wonders if the topee worn all day, but always exchanged for a hat at sundown, which is carried in motor or carriage, is an absolute necessity in winter.

In the middle of the members' stand a half circle of steps ascend to the Vice-Regal enclosure, which is opposite the winning post, and in front of it is an opening on to the course.

Excited murmurs of "Here he comes," turned our eyes to the left, where we saw approaching in cantering twos, the bodyguard in scarlet uniform, bearing their fluttering pennants, with jangle of sword and curb chains, and the sun glinting on their spurs. They advanced with their brown faces immobile, their decorum perfect.

Opposite the judges' stand they lined up as one man, lances like a row of pickets, and the outriders advanced, followed by His Excellency's carriage with postilions and escort. He descended with his party, for there were two carriages, and he and Lady Hardinge were received by Sir Allen Arthur, General B. Mahon, and Mr. Apostolides, and escorted to their enclosure.

The Viceroy's Cup, a large silver gilt one, reposed on its plinth on a table on the lawn directly in front of them for all to pause and inspect. After the race, His Excellency graciously carried it up to Mr. Apcar, the owner of the winning horse, Mayfowl, as Mr. Apcar, who had risen from a sick bed to be present, was unequal to the task of leaving his box to receive the trophy. After the next race the Viceregal Party departed, and later winners and losers on the day, waited at the gate in a chaos of vehicles till their own appeared and whisked them in clouds of dust elsewhere.

The marvellous activity in winter of the Anglo-Indian is exemplified by his capacity to dance or theatre late at night after a strenuous day, and rise for morning gallops or a paper chase at six.

By seven the racecourse is thronged with men, women, and "flappers," gaily cantering or wildly galloping around. It is patent to the most unobservant that the most is made of every recreation in India, and one who has lived in a land of "benefits forgot," as I have, cannot but feel a thrill of pleasure in being amongst those so keen on outdoor sport, and so lively at indoor diversions. For except the younger generation of polo players, who take themselves so seriously that they live on an ascetic Monk's Lenten diet, and eschew dances for an early bed,

the community of Calcutta so splendidly capable as box wallas, are magnificently joyous, be it dancing, flying or riding.

Although Government House was observing strict Court etiquette as regards large entertainments, "Belvidere," the residence of the State Governor, Sir Samuel Baker, was the scene of two delightful balls during my stay in Calcutta. The long ballroom with perfect floor, is surrounded by a wide space furnished for sitting out, and is also encircled by a charming balcony, where non-dancers can see the brilliant assembly without congesting the space below.

The large drawing-rooms were hospitably thrown open, and below the ball-room a palm-embowered supper-room, beautifully decorated and lighted with red, tempted one to ignore partners above, whilst one toyed with supper. My memory of one of these dances is clouded by a friendship shattered by this very innocent cause. Some day when I write my confessions it will make a pretty little bit of fiction.

On the last day of the year I went to Tollygunge steeplechase course for the last of my Calcutta racing. Starting early, I drove in a friend's Victoria, arriving in time for lunch, which was served on tables under the trees back of the tiny grand-stand. Natives, waving tall bamboo poles, with colored flags everywhere, amongst the luncheon tables, excited a query from me as to what they were for, and I learned with amusement, as my attention was drawn to the network of string tied across below the trees, that our food was being preserved for us from the kites, who were longing to fly down and snatch it from our plates.

When I began this little account of nobody's travels, I meant it to be peeps of geography, but who that has travelled in India can leave it at that alone? Names must crop in, because names are what one lives with, and by, in India. Therefore, the tragedy of Gerard must go down. It was one of the saddest races I've ever seen. Three p.m., and all aglow with the wine in the Indian sun, for, oh! the day was warm. There was a look of Virginian marsh about the course. The red, green, blue, and purple of the natives sais garments blotching the only color on the course; for the ladies were singularly unsmart this day, and the men as ever on an Indian racecourse marred from an air of distinction by the topee. The field consisted of Circassian Best, Baron Athol, Kaffirpan, and Foy, Mystic Circle, Idle, Gerard, Maisonette, and Countenance, all thirsting for the fray.

Did we idle women sense the disaster? If we had, would it have mattered? This thought, to me, is the one that makes racing a crime, we are so indifferent of result. The crowd politely murmured, "They are off." The ones in front saw, the ones next tried to, those in the back waited for excited spectators to proclaim places. I was of the latter. The programme described the race as "distance, about three miles." I was surreptitiously powdering my nose, when a gasp proclaimed some disaster. I peered through several rude backs, and saw opposite the grand-stand that Kaffirpan was leading.

"Gerard has broken down," was being muttered, but Gerard ran a gallant race. Around the last bend they came. There was no crack of whip, no feeling of urging a finish, only a sickening sense of horses hoofs, an

expectant silence and a finish, with Kaffirpan first, and Gerard a close second. In fifteen minutes he was dead. Dear, brave old beast! He ran a furlong with a broken pastern, the heart that heroes are made of beat beneath his hairy hide.

It was a magnificent effort, and at night it was as though it had never been. Many murmured sympathetic regrets to Mr. "Billy" Miles, the young owner who alone, perhaps, knows the misery I felt in seeing this pathetic finish to my last glimpse of sporting Calcutta.

Benares on the Ganges—showing the burning-ghauts.

BENARES.

NANDESAR HOUSE,
BENARES.

My dear George,—

I arrived in Benares on January 3rd, in glorious sunshine.

The Christmas rains that seem so universal in India had not fallen, and all was dusty and shimmering in the golden, morning light.

Captain Plant had come to meet me in the Maharajah's carriage, with two men on the box, two behind in the red and gold livery of their master. We bowled along the streets of Benares, which at that point exhibit no individual charm, to Nandesar House, which the Maharajah generously keeps up for his European visitors. The compound is being made over into an Italian garden, and tents are going up for the German Crown Prince's camp, as he is shortly to visit Benares. On the house, as one enters, a plate with this inscription is noticed:—"This house was the residence of Mr. Davis, Magistrate of Benares, and defended by him single-handed with a spear on January 14th, 1799, against two hundred armed rebels, led by Nawab Wagir Ali."

My rooms are upstairs. To get to them we passed a wondrous electric light affair, of a glass peacock, with trailing tail, and higher an imitation well, surmounted

by lattice, covered with metal grape leaves. The bunches of fruit being electric globes surmounted with glass grapes of purple, yellow, and green. The walls of the stairway are covered with portraits of native princes.

I have a dining-room, three sitting rooms, my bedroom and bath, the latter appointed as well as that of an up-to-date American Hotel, save that no water runs in the taps and shower marked hot; it would not be India if it did.

The rooms were upholstered by a Calcutta firm for the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The decorator has done it villainously—devils could do no more to make it ugly. French they doubtlessly call it, and much money it must have cost.

The things that aroused my enthusiasm, however, were some pictures by a native artist, scenes in Indian life, which were really lovely—like picture pages from an old missal, and a white marble, large stone chair, or sofa, with back and sides of pierced marble like the Taj screens about the tomb. This is on the back balcony, which is wide and airy, and looks on a garden not unlike that approaching the great Agra testimony of the immortality of love.

After an excellent tiffin, which I ate in solemn grandeur alone, I was taken in a motor to Sarnath, where a museum has been built to preserve the figures, bas reliefs, and pillars, excavated from the ruins, which, to the casual observer to-day, are but incoherent walls. However, it is fraught with interest from having been the old Benares, where Buddha lived and taught.

Leaving the pretty avenue and Ghazipur Road at the third mile-stone, and turning to the left, one comes upon

two towers, one on a hill and the other, said to be the best preserved of the Bengal Topes; but when carefully explored in 1835 it was found to contain no relics.

The building consists of a stone basement, 93 feet in diameter, solidly built, the stones being clamped together with iron to the height of 43 feet. Above that it is in brickwork, rising to a height of 110 feet above the surrounding ruins, and 128 feet above the plain. Externally, the lower part is relieved by eight projecting faces. In each is a small niche, intended apparently to contain a seated figure of Buddha. Below them, encircling the monument, is a band of sculptured ornaments. The central part consists of geometric patterns of great intricacy, but combined with singular skill. Above and below a design of foliage is carved equally well. We leant against it as we stood watching the sunset. My companion had only come because I had, which, to me, was irksome, as I felt an additional duty in his already busy day.

I wanted to sit and dream of the past history of this ancient spot, for it is certain it was a flourishing and important place six centuries before the Christian era. My mind pictured the procession of stirring events, the arrival of Sakya Muni, who came here from Holy Gya to establish his religion. I wished to mentally conjure up the fervent monk in his Eastern draperies, walking about this Tope. I've bought a beautiful native water color, which I like to think expresses his face.

Then I might have dreamed of the glorious Raja Jaichana, "whose army was as countless as the sand," but was defeated and killed by the General of Shahab-ud-din Ghori in 12th century, when the Emperor Alla-ud-din

destroyed 1,000 temples and built mosques in their stead. In consequence of the iconoclastic spirit of her conquerors, Benares to-day has little that dates before the age of Akbar, yet it is the Holy City, and one million Hindoo worshippers of Shiva, the Destroyer, visit it every year.

The magnanimous spirit of the present Maharajah is shown by his gift of a large prayer-ground to the Mohammedans, a tolerance not found amongst Christian sects.

Every pilgrim visiting Benares makes the circuit of Panch Kosi around the sacred territory of Benares, a distance of 45 miles in length, and occupying six days to complete.

I had an interesting view of many of the devout next morning. Rising early, I embarked on the Ganges in a covered row-boat, manned by six villainous looking kishti-walas, or sailors, with short oars, which they barely dipped in the water. A guidesman in the prow, huddled with openly contemptuous glance on his face at our curiosity at the sights before us, and such sights! A human rainbow. Other curious tourists in parties, obviously "Cooks," sat in herds on the roof of motor launches, whilst launches enclosed with slat shutters of the purdah carriage variety, emitted sounds of the phonograph and gramophone, set with Hindoo records. Truly this may be said to be a union of West and East.

Everywhere men, women, and children were bathing on the ghat steps. As we slowly floated along under our white linen awning, I saw huge piles of faggots with red or white projecting points low down near the water. If red, they denote the body of a woman, for the feet alone are left out. Soon the wood was smouldering, and

The devout "contemplating" under fibre umbrellas—Benares.

later, when we returned, only a charred spot marked what had been once the embodiment of joy, of hate, of love, of life. Often when too poor to send their dead much wood, the remains of the bodies are pushed by reverent relatives into the river, and as the women are always buried in their anklets and bracelets, the interiors of caught crocodiles frequently display these indigestible morsels.

More than anywhere else are seen on these Benares ghats, the huge umbrellas, made of palm woven fibre on bamboo frames, shading the native as he sits to pray or contemplate the Ganges.

The recently-bathed were everywhere indulging in wrestling or calisthenic exercises, holding on to a bar or the top edge of a wall, raising and lowering themselves in quick successive movements, that brought all the muscles of the back, arms, and legs into play. I thought of our dirty unemployed, whose only voluntary exercise is jaw action in eating or speaking. Why the skin of the native is not rough and chapped is a marvel.

They are never entirely nude when bathing, as the loin-cloth is always retained, and in coming from the water the low class use no towels, but when partially dried by the air, the garment to be worn on the legs, a length of about four yards of cotton, is enveloped about the body, and the wet loin cloth allowed to drop.

The cotton is then used as a towel, and deftly crossed between the legs until it makes a pair of respectable trousers. The shirt is put on, and the toilet completed. It is amusing to see a very black Hindoo, his face smeared with some greasy form of soap, which makes it as white as a clown's, sitting on his hunkers, for all

the world like a great monkey. That he means to clean himself is obvious enough, but his indifference to the remains of burnt bodies, and the more unspeakable filth everywhere about him in the water, robs his ablution of that chastity which is usually associated with the Englishman's bath.

The small, brass bowl that every native possesses is used to hold water to cleanse the mouth, vigorous rubbing of the teeth with the forefinger, gargling and sluicing goes on with frequent expectoration, regardless of the proximity of the neighbours engaged in washing their faces and bodies. That it is the Ganges, the holiest of water, seems to their minds, to free it from all personal pollution.

There is no strikingly individual building on the ghats. All are huddled together, merging into a grim pile of stone, mellow and neutral. A rare gilded dome is sometimes seen, glinting amongst the grey, or the green of a tree, but for color one depends on the dress of the native and the indigo blue paint of the boats. Colored post-cards of the ghats make them a rainbow of blue, pink, and gold. It exists only in the artist's dream.

The Benares Maharajah's Palace for death was pointed out. All the rich Hindoos come, if possible, to die on the left bank of the Ganges, as from it souls are instantly transported to heaven. Some years ago the mother of the present Maharajah, having been doomed by the court astrologer to die in three weeks' time, was sent from the Palace on the right bank with the Maharajah's first, and elderly wife and mother of his heir, and his second and only other, an emancipated lady of then less than thirty years. The Hindoo custom is that these

female relatives should attend the dying till her last hour; but when four months passed, and there seemed no likelihood of the astrologer's prophecy coming true, the young wife calmly packed and announced her intention of returning to the summer palace.

That the hen-pecked husband is not a creation of Western civilization is proved by the fact that the Maharajah fled to the jungle, and remained there a fortnight when the news of his disobedient wife's intended return was brought to him.

We got out of our boat at one ghat, and went up the steps past the bathing and contemplating Hindoos, past the fakir, lean and begging, the juggler with his cobra and mango, into a narrow lane not four feet wide, I'm sure, sloppy and slippery with mud, strewn with fresh flowers dropped by the devout on their way to one of the thousand shrines in this network of temples.

Runners ahead made way for the Maharajah's guest, so we were not importuned for alms from the hundreds of ragged, miserable beggars that infest this part; for we were approaching the temple of Annapurma, a goddess who is supposed to have had express orders from Bisheshwar to feed the inhabitants of Benares. Close to this Baboos were writing certificates at the Temple of Sakhi Vinayak, the witnessing deity for the pilgrims who have completed the Panch Kosi circuit. We passed also the temple of Shaukareshwar, Shukar being Venus. Here bits of cotton and threads tied to the grille work doors proclaimed the number of women who had been to pray for handsome sons. Behind the Mir Ghaut we found the Nepalese Temple, which municipal authorities prohibit women from regarding because of its obscene carvings.

So we wended a narrow stone staircase in a tiny building, to see the Golden Temple, which is crammed in so tightly amongst other buildings one could never see the roof by looking up from the adjoining lanes. This roof has plates of copper covered by gold. The expense of gilding was borne by Maharajah Ranjit Singh, of Lahore, whose daughter curiously enough travelled back to Lahore with me from Amritzar, where we had both visited the Golden Temple on a day sacred to Hindoos. She wore a native woman's dress with sarai over the head of claret-colored silk, and on her gloveless hands rings of European setting. On her feet she wore English tan shoes and stockings, and a beautiful long sable coat over her native dress. She was accompanied by a European companion, who talked to her in German, but they spoke English to a native who saw them off. The Princess Ranjit Singh struck me as a singularly interesting and magnetic personality. I have not seen the fakir on his bed of nail points; or the devout treading the hot coals with bare feet, but I visited the Cow Temple and saw the silly sacred one, garlanded with flowers amidst a throng of worshippers, all reeking of pungent crushed flowers, the orange marigolds being particularly unpleasant.

After that I climbed to another second storey to see the famous nine bells, which hang from a carved stone frame work between the Temples of Mahadeo and Bisheshwar. The finest of these bells was presented by the Maharajah of Nepal. In these crowded narrow passages more than anywhere else I've been do I sense the East that other travellers have written of. India heretofore has not conveyed the idea of a great ancient civi-

lisation. The old buildings are magnificent, but then so are our English Cathedrals, yet no one enthuses about stone carvings of the reign of Edward I. Here in Benares each building is fraught with interest in form or carving. It is impossible to assimilate it in a casual tour. One should speak Hindoostani and loiter with a powerful sahib for hours to grasp all there is to be seen.

We forced our way through to the bazaar, where I was disappointed with the so-called famous Benares brass. Jeypore beats her at her own game, and curiously enough I purchased in Bombay Jeypore metal cheaper than one gets it where it is made.

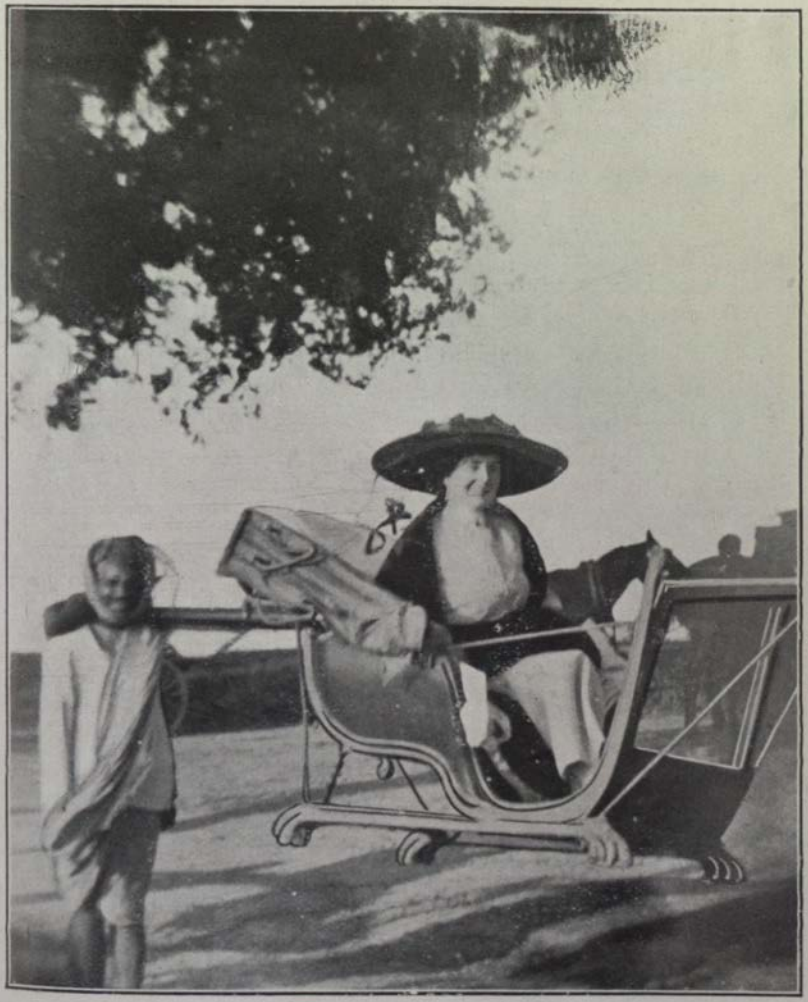
We went upstairs to a silk merchant; again I quarrelled with the Allahabad exhibition. Where are the vaunted brocades of gold and silver and lovely silks supposed to be here? Surely all the Benares product is not at the United Provinces Fair? I purchased gauze scarves with the gold and silver gilt borders that some people like; I don't. The Eastern work at its best is tawdry finery in my estimation of the beautiful.

The Durga or Monkey Temple in the native town we saw in the afternoon on our way to visit His Highness. It is not exciting; the plaster is stained red with ochre, and it is picturesquely situated by a fine tank. Three times a day a large drum is beaten by the priests. Twelve curiously carved pillars on a platform raised four feet above the ground support the central portion. In the porch are two bells, and through the brass-plated doors may be seen the image of the goddess, and over it all dozens of live monkeys.

We rolled along to the banks of the Ganges, where we left the motor for quaint sedan-like open chairs, carried by two coolies, and were borne to the River's edge, where we were rowed to the water entrance of the Maharajah's Palace.

Here one ascends a broad flight of steps, turns to the right, and climbs more steps, turns to the left, again to the left, and arrives at the Palace entrance, where eight solemn guards stand in livery with presented battle-axes. Here we were met by the Maharajah's son and escorted up another flight of steps to a large audience chamber, hung with the present ruler's portrait, and dozens of his ancestors by native artists. The room has two fine marble mantel-pieces, and illimitable windows, chairs, and tables spaced in geometrical precision, and presumably a fine Indian carpet on the floor. At present, like the furniture, it is shrouded in a white cotton cover; glass-prismed chandeliers, and French clock-work toys complete the furniture of this apartment.

The Maharajah, an alert little man, looking younger than his son, who is large and very fat, entered unannounced. We were presented, and to amuse us he first took us to see the lovely view from the audience chamber balcony; then below to an open courtyard enclosed by rooms, where from the safe confines of one of the surrounding apartments were brought his wonderful jewels. Emeralds the size of walnuts—certainly not flawless. Rubies like large flat prunes in size. Pearls, more pearls, and still more strings of the lovely, creamy gems, for seldom, in the Indian jewels, are they the pure white color Europeans demand; but here one sees size, lustre, and skin in good condition.



The Author being carried to the Maharajah of Benares' boat on the Ganges.

We also saw the emerald, engraved and slightly curved like a saucer over three inches in diameter that once held the Koh-i-nor, when it was India's tomb guarding gem. Then, as he had an engagement to drive with the Maharajah of Kashmir, our host sent for the native, silver, ribbon, garlands, with medallions of Delhi needlework, and hanging one on each, he sprinkled Indian scent on our handkerchiefs and departed, leaving his son to show us the interesting armoury that led off from this courtyard. In it is a fine collection of muskets, the barrels wondrously chased or of Damascene inlay. The sword and dagger blades exquisitely beautiful—some with an open space in the centre of the blades—had tiny pearls running up and down in infinitesimally fine grooves. The hilts either of lovely carved jade, inset with gems, carved ivory, or bejewelled gold and silver. Spears and chain armour, and relics of more barbaric times were ranged around the walls.

From here we were taken through an open space, where large buildings adjoin, in which are the Law Courts. Through a gate whereon the native piper plays, to the open road, where in a cage a large tiger is confined. He growled and roared for our amusement when teased by an attendant; he was finally rewarded for his share of the entertainment with a huge bit of raw meat. We retraced our steps to the courtyard, where we bade the gentle son of the Maharajah good-bye and continued our way to the ghat and thence by boat back to the left bank.

Cantonment life here is much the same as in other small places. At the Club racquets and tennis obtain

daily, and people drop in at dusk for gossip and salted chip potatoes, which they eat in the fingers like almonds, or as the Americans do pop corn.

I hear my presence here yesterday is provoking curiosity. The Army officer's wife with whom I had tea on my first day has been visited by the entire English community to inquire who I am. "Tell them," I said, laughingly, "that I'm the morganatic wife of the exalted foreign visitor," and I am amused to think some of those who saw me there may point me out as such when next they see me, if my unimportant features linger in their memories. Apparently it has been a propitious season for weddings, for the outward and visible sign of this inward and spiritual grace is everywhere evident in the houses, which for the event have always external mural decorations according to the size of the inhabitants' income. On the houses of the well-to-do wondrous bas relief are executed of Rajahs, animals, and the British soldier, invariably with his musket over the wrong shoulder, and frequently a marvellous kilted Scotchman, all painted in washes of gay color. On the poorer house only several rows of spots, sometimes a single row of dots, denoted the joy within. The drawings are always crude and lifeless—be it beast or man. Nowhere does one see the exquisite fidelity of expression Japanese artists even of the lowest rank impart to their figures.

Next morning, under towering clouds, I left Benares, which, as my train pulled out, was bathed in the first rain I saw in India.

LAHORE.

PUNJAB EXPRESS.

Dear old Ruth,—

The Railway Station at Lahore was gay with decorations of greenery and flowers the night we got there, in anticipation of the arrival a few days later of the German Crown Prince, and for the first time in India I sensed something in the air suggestive of winter as I drove to my Hotel. Here my sitting room was an attractive one, opening off a verandah and into a bedroom that reminded me of bedrooms in Scotch castles, so small was it in ground plan, so intensely high, with windows placed up at quite unwashable distances. Laid on its side the room would have been a spacious apartment, but I felt in a prison when I awoke next morning, and registered a vow not to present my letters of introduction to the Lieut. Governor's wife, Lady Dane or to Mrs. Butler, the wife of the Deputy Commissioner, but to see the city as a sight and hurry on to Rawal Pindi.

A huge bunch of roses from a local acquaintance put me on better terms with Lahore. Had we left it at that we would probably have been friends to-day; but he came around to do guide, and, like the average Anglo-Indian, knew less about the points of interest in his town than a visiting stranger, who at least has guide book information in his head when he arrives.

We drove past "Kims" gun, of which I took pictures that were subsequently spoiled by a fool of a photographer in Umballa; then on the fort, where had I gone as a tourist, an intelligent "Tommy" would have been told off to show me round, and I would have had pleasant impressions. As it is, I remember the fort principally from the fact that the subaltern who showed us about in pointing out the various fine and curious weapons in the armoury called our attention to gaps in the wall from which a recent Commander in Chief had looted weapons.

What we did see, however, was the rhinoceros hide round shield of Gura Govind; his battle axe, with blade of fine Damascus steel; and some helmets inscribed Akal Sipahi, taken by the English from the Sikhs; also long gauntleted swords used for fencing; cuirasses with brass cocks on them, which belonged to the officers commanding the French regiments, and the rings of steel used as missiles in war by the Akalis and others. The crests of these soldiers, called Jikars, are also shown.

There are cannons with barrels turning like those in revolvers. An obus inscribed in Persian "Victory or Death, 1815," and a number of camel guns and many coats of mail. Through the door one saw the sun glinting on the Palace portion of the fort, which when explored awakened memories of Agra from its formation, and the plaster and mirror work within which is to be restored for the Viceroy's visit this year.

All over Lahore we drove looking for the tomb of Anar-Kali, of which the guide book says "the 99 names of God carved on the white marble cenotaph are so exquisitely formed as to surpass anything of the kind in India." I can only lament that I had a self-appointed

guide, in place of paying a professional one to show me the points of interest, but we did see the most interesting bazaar street outside of Benares.

It is so narrow that two conveyances can only pass at certain points. The houses on either side, high and ornamental in their woodwork, reminded one of the street scenes in Tunis. The shops were the ever glorious rainbow of color, and mysteries of smell, that every Indian bazaar presents. I purchased odd and sundry pieces of old bokhara ware and a hubble bubble pipe, the Mohammedan variety, with long curling tube. The Hindoo kind varies by having a long stiff tube, which supports the fire and tobacco jar at one end, and has the other inserted in the water vessel. Near the vessel another stiff tube, with mouthpiece at the top, is inserted at a slanting angle in the pipe that holds the fuel cup.

When it came to paying for these articles my R's 100 note was refused, despite the fact that it states "The Bank of Upper India promises to pay on demand R's 100." A street broker led us to a local banker's. With the shutters down the native bank presented a single room entirely open on the street side, with a long desk running along the back, and one intersecting it in front, divided the front of the Bank into two small offices. Here, after endorsing the note and paying a discount, it was changed to notes of R's 10 and silver. A further commission to our street broker, and I was able to pay for my purchases and drive away.

The direction we now took was one my friend knew thoroughly, the gardens surrounding Montgomery Hall, a splendid tree-embowered drive, containing tennis courts and cricket pitch and the inevitable Zoo.

In the Hall itself, which is a finely proportioned building, with one of the best dancing floors in India, the strains of a band were swelling, and coffee and cakes were being dispensed in a rather primitive manner at one end. At the other end, though it was not six o'clock, dancing was being vigorously pursued, and most people had come prepared to do it, although I saw one couple, the man in tennis shoes and his partner in riding habit and boots; but "it's a poor heart that never rejoices."

"The glorious tomb of His Majesty, Asylum of Protection, Nur-ud-din Muhammad, the Emperor Jahangir, 1627," is one of the loveliest spots in Lahore. As one drove along to it enveloped in furs, with an English, velvet, winter hat, in place of the eternal topee, one felt glad to be alive.

We crossed the Railway, paying toll, and over the bridge we went, passing ruined tombs, for which we did not dismount. We arrived at a fine archway fifty feet high, that leads into the Dilkusha Garden of the Empress Nur Jehan, that is to-day most beautifully kept up. The mausoleum is constructed like the lowest terrace at Sikandara, with four minarets at the corners and a small pavilion over the tomb in the centre.

The cenotaph is of white marble, with inlay work of pietra dura, and has the 99 names of God beautifully carved on the East and West sides. The passage to the tomb chamber is paved with marble brought all the way from Jeypore, Jaisalmer, and other quarries, and on the four sides of the tomb are exquisite marble lattice-work screens. Ascending to the flat roof one sees four minarets, one in each corner. These are four stories high, and leave the ill conditioned breathless. If silence gives

consent, it would be a good place for lovers to bring the maiden—or widow—of their choice and propose. The view from them is superb. Alas! my picture taken in one was spoiled with the rest of fifteen films by that "Poggle" at Umballa; also a delightful group of father, mother, and tiny babe that I took at the entrance to this lovely mosque.

To pass Amritzar without seeing the Golden Temple was impossible, so I went back to spend a morning there before starting for Rawal Pindi. January 7th is a Hindoo festival day, and Amritzar was gay with strings festooned across the streets, bearing three-cornered pieces of colored tissue paper. My tiresome friend from Lahore accompanied me, and again destroyed, as far as he was able, my enjoyment of the day.

The temple was a bustling scene of noise and gaily-dressed crowds, which filled me with delight. Never had I beheld till that moment Indians in gala attire; cotton was exchanged for silk, accompanied by multiple ornaments, and flowers galore.

I found in place of covering my shoes with the cotton ones usually provided, I was required to take mine off before putting on the temple slippers. With two native police guarding me front and back, we started across the courtyard down a flight of steps upon a view that impelled a cry of delight. The pool that lies about the temple is so much larger, the temple so much smaller, than I imagined it, and as we descended to the ledge that surrounds the tank and runs out like a pier to the temple, we were jostled and pushed by hundreds of men, women, children and sacred bulls. The latter with silver-mounted horns, garlands of flowers about their necks, as well as

tight-fitting necklaces of large china and glass beads, and looking as silly as they probably felt themselves to be. All this stimulated me to a frenzy of delight.

A pungent odor of jessamine was over everything. This was the East, and for the moment I felt part of it. It was only a moment, however, till my carping friend, who hates the native with an unaccountable loathing, began to urge me to give up the joy of entering the temple. "I'm sure your husband would never allow you to go on in this crowd," he reiterated, until I reminded him that neither the Church, the Law, nor I had given him the prerogative to usurp the dictatorial attitude of one whom the law calls mine, so on I went.

No picture I have ever seen of the Amritzar Golden Temple has conveyed the beauty of that scene. We were the only Europeans there. Except for the occasional Baboos' half European dress, our world might never have existed. It was the East, purged of all Western influence save those collars, ties, coats and flaunting waistcoats of the Baboos.

Glittering in the sun, the Temple that Ranjit Singh seized in 1802 and roofed with copper gilt, from whence it takes its name of Golden Temple, lured me on. Except for the lower parts of its walls, which are of white marble, the entire building is covered with gilded copper, engraved with verses from the Granth Sahib in Punjabi characters.

The four doors, covered with finely wrought silver, were open; the interior packed with a swerving mass of rose, blue, violet, green yellow, and white enveloped humans. In a shepherd's plaid black and white tweed I felt a distinct anachronism. The altar inside, with its

gilded dome, was covered with offerings tossed there by this surging crowd, through which we squeezed to a staircase to the roof. Once up I so much wanted to take a picture, but for some reason, though it may be photographed from any point outside, none are allowed to be taken upon its sacred precinct; so we descended for a final glimpse of its interior walls, richly gilded and painted with flowers.

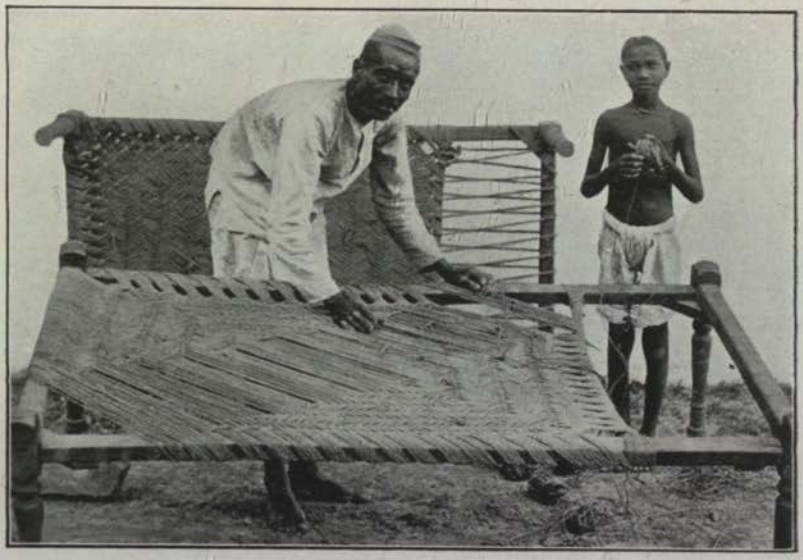
We then retraced our steps along the marble pier to the west side, where we entered gilt-domed Akal Bungah, which was built in the time of Arjan the 5th Guru. A low stairway led us to a room with open balcony in front. This room held a gilt ark in front of the projecting window or balcony, on the floor of which was spread a common cotton cloth. After several rupees had changed from my pocket to the priest's, he sullenly withdrew the cloth, revealing a large sword, falchion shaped and about four feet long. It is the reputed sword of Guru Govind, whose shield of rhinoceros hide we saw at Lahore, but nothing else could we induce the holy attendant to display.

We returned to the gateway, its doors covered with massive silver plates that look like lead. In the Treasury at this place there are thirty-one pillars of silver nine feet high and 4½ inches in diameter and four larger ones, but no bribe would induce the attendants, who were most sullen, to open the chests and display the gilt maces and canopy set with precious stones which are used when the granth is carried in procession.

It is just possible all these treasures were being used in a procession when we arrived, a fact that did not penetrate my friend's vaunted knowledge of Hindoostani.

I first politely asked, then implored to be shown these things I'd come so far to see, finally produced a sovereign and demanded. It only resulted in a flow of language I could not understand, nor my interpreter explain, so I left rather angry and disappointed.

Freed from the boring presence of my self-appointed guide, whose hatred of the native is so great he pocketed the tip I left for the kitmagar at the railway station lunch room, I now look back upon that feast of color and perfumed humanity as one of the loveliest sights to be found in India.



A Native Bed.

The Street Barber—Rawal Pindi.

RAWAL PINDI.

FLASHMAN'S HOTEL,
RAWAL PINDI.

My dearest Dot,—

Leaving Lahore at night, we arrived in blinding sheets of rain at Rawal Pindi next morning almost before dawn, and could only get to the hotel by tonga, and such a Hotel! Having registered at the office, I was escorted an entire block outside in the rain, across the street and into another compound, where an entire bungalow was allotted to me and my maid. A small verandah level with the ground opened into a sitting room; "chicks," as the lined bamboo blinds are called, hung on each section of the verandah, and over each door to ensure privacy. There are two bedrooms and two bathrooms; for if it is primitive in India, at least one has the comfort of isolation at the toilet.

The army officer and wife who had vacated my premises left me the gloom of holes in the plaster, caused by the nails their family gods had hung on. But a cheerful fire in the various hearths dispelled the dampness; and, later, when a mali, or native gardener, dripping and wretched came by, bearing a huge basket tray on his head of sweet-scented jonquils, violets, and tawny wallflowers, for a rupee the room was made to bloom, for flowers are cheap in India.

Exercise one must, so, despite the rain, late in the afternoon we ventured out to walk. Murree Hills, beautiful always, are now a very salome of loveliness, in the seven veils of mist the dampness draped them in.

A Military camp was set in a line with the hills. Horses shivering under dripping blankets, and reflected in the pools of water everywhere. Miserable native sais huddled over fires, smouldering sulkily, of damp wood; and this is only peace warfare. One paused to wonder at the greed of politicians who, in perpetual comfort, dare to cut down the cost of the "panoply of war" to squander it in ignoble ways.

There is no individuality in the English cantonment; streets at right angles, the eternal Mall, the bungalow with English chintz and silver photo frames, they are almost all alike.

I did find an original note, however, in this very place, but it was a man's quarters. About his front door were all the things one looks for in a stable. Even a cart in ghostly winding sheet nestled under the verandah eaves. Judge then of the joy when the door opened to find oneself in intense ruby gloom. The mantel board concealed by a dull toned piece of satin, with the French knots solid work, called Bokhara embroidery. An ingle nook wainscotted and covered with the most lovely Persian dark red carpet, exquisite in texture. French posters flirting on the walls with etchings, old engravings, modern water colors, and the inevitable naughty lady. Men are divided into two classes—the ones who put lovely women on their walls and the ones who keep them between the covers of rare editions on book shelves; but all men keep pictures somewhere of the ladies of their dreams.

Tiger skins were on the floor, racing cups everywhere. By the window a lovely old French writing desk, that was not hired in the bazaar, where most of the bungalow furniture comes from to grace the erstwhile home of the English mem sahib; and goes back there, then on to mingle in the emotion of the next family.

Every bungalow in winter has a wide or narrow fender seat; this one has no exception in this respect; I sat on it back to the blaze and poured out tea for my host. He is an extraordinary person, a Captain in the army, a barrister by profession, a rider of races, a shooter of animals, and a linguist of exceptional merit. Knowledgable to the last degree of art, music, and literature; a connoisseur in old china and silver and all the dear, delightful things an early George called "objects of bigotry and virtue." Then when you've said all this of him, one always adds, "and he's a famous cook"; such a man will never starve, except for recognition of his higher qualities.

The Mohurran festival is on, for it is January, the holiest of months, in which in older times it was unholy to wage war, but camels, cows, sheep, goats, and lambs are sacrificed.

All the morning the streets near the bazaar, which is so new, it is like a church fete affair put up for a week only, have been gay with curious temples, like dolls' houses, made of flimsy paste and light wood and decorated in a most tawdry manner with tinsels, gilt and colored paper. They are carried in a procession on this tenth day of January. These Tabuts or Tagiyas, which are supposed to simulate the tomb of Ali at Kar-

bala, will be thrown into the sea or other water, or, in the absence of water, buried.

The rains hold off; it is a day of shivering cold weather, however, and one goes to the race meeting enveloped in furs.

I have seen races in Lucknow, in Allahabad, and Calcutta, but for real joy of racing commend me to Pindi. Grown men run about like little boys, playing at the game. A tiny grandstand holds the local beauty and fashion. Paris need not look to her laurels on that account, however. Four or five bookies shout the smallest odds I have ever heard called. Sometimes they refused to bet at all, which made us angry; but they know the course, they know the horses, and they know the dear, reckless gentlemen riders; and after all a father's heart often beats 'neath a bookie's waistcoat.

My little friend, whose hospitality I enjoyed yesterday, and his conversation more than anyone's in India, was running about in jockey kit as serious as the Mohammedans, whose chant, "Ya Hasan! Ya Hasain! Ya Ali!" could be heard circling in the far distance.

The 10th Hussars drag drove up with a dash inside the course. On the flat beyond bang went a gun; it was the bearer of an officer using his master's best "Purdy" to shoot a crow for his own dinner.

Whilst back of the stand two horses were being led out in the paddock, where three riders shivered and wondered at the result—three riders and two horses, for, alas! the spirit of religion was abroad, and the third man's sais had wandered away across the flat with his pony regardless of time, his master's wrath, or the race.

Enthralled by the tom-tom's beat, the pipe's lone call, the flaunting banner and tawdry toy, borne aloft on the gaily-dressed native shoulders, the sais and pony wandered on, and the race proceeded without them. We ascended the stand and saw our two friends gallop round in mud over the fetlocks. It was not a speedy race, there were no cheers as the winner came down the straight, and the owner of the absent horse was cursing.

In the steeplechase, distance three miles, Capt. Lane gave a beautiful performance leading on "Leading Lady." He fell at the second jump. The field he'd left behind closed up on him, and as the second horse took off for the jump he fell at, he rose with his horse, mounted, and got at once into the leading stride, and won by so many lengths at top weight, the owner must have been furious.

A professional or more knowing jockey would probably have given the horse a sore mouth for the good of future betting. After this Col. Cayley and the officers of the West Yorkshire Regiment entertained the entire course to tea in a comfy marquee tent sheltered from the wind, carpeted with a gay durri, and decorated with palms. To the strains of the band we left the view of Murree Hills, then soft and tender as they faced the grandstand under the fitful rays of a setting sun, that for the hour dispelled the shadows left by fog and rain of the day before.

Rain, more rain, and soughing wind next day. Polo was an impossibility; the ground was a shallow lake. The all conquering 10th Hussars, fresh from triumphs of Allahabad and Calcutta, vainly chafed to get on their ponies again, but relentless nature drowned their hopes in rain.

There is a park in Rawal Pindi that is prodigal in delightful curves and stretches to drive about in; and if it is commonplace in its neutral coloring on a wet afternoon, the story I heard as I drove through it opened up again the India of love and passion one dreams of, before one sees it, in its closeness to mother earth, that earth in her dirty dusty mood the low class Hindoo effects. Not mother earth of this damp afternoon, the green leaves glistening from the recent rain, and kissed into lines of golden light from a traitor sun that at each evening of these past few wet days has glinted a promise of a fine to-morrow. The India this story is of is the inscrutable East, and as I heard it I try to write it.

"On the last day of September, or, to be accurate, on the first day of October, I was sleeping in the compound near Colonel Vaughan, on one of those native, wooden frame beds, with canvas strips woven across as its only form of mattress, for it was still very hot.

I was roused about 2 p.m. by a sais in a perturbed state, who begged me to come at once, as a man had been murdered near the stables. I got up as I was and walked in the fitful light of a lantern, for there was no moon, and it was very dark to where the object pointed out as the dead man, lay.

I touched him with my foot, and he moved. "What the devil do you mean by waking me up and dragging me here," I said; "this man is not dead." "But I am dying, Sahib," the object on the ground said. I had the lantern placed where I could see him, and found to my horror it was Clems' sais. He was stabbed through the abdomen and bleeding profusely. I sent at once for the ambulance tonga to take him to the hospital, and while

we waited for it he told me he'd swear it was my sais who had done it—stabbed him with Clems' sword whilst he lay asleep. The wounded man sat up without a moan, as brave as they make them, for he must have been in horrible pain, and when the tonga came I told the men to lift him in, but he refused, and insisted on getting up and walking to it, only leaning on their arms. He never moaned once; it was superb endurance. They drove him to the hospital, poor devil, where he died four hours after.

"Where are the police?" I asked my sais when the wounded man had gone. "I don't know, sahib. No police been here to-night." "Well send for them and tell them it is Abdul who has done this. There's a train out at 5 o'clock; he'll probably try to get away on that, and have the Bazaar searched," and I picked my way back with a careful look out for snakes. I had just got into a comfortable doze when the melancholy sais and another native woke me up and said another man had been murdered in the Bazaar.

"What the devil has it to do with me?" I said. "Why am I to be dragged out because some bally native sees fit to go on a slaughtering party? Where is he, anyway? If it is any distance, I'm going to dress first," and I did. When we got to the second man, his head was almost severed from his body, and he was surrounded by native friends. "Will the sahib kindly examine the body and see that he is dead?" they asked. "See that he is dead, you old poggle! How can a man be otherwise with his head hanging by a bit of skin?" But his wound, see, sahib; for evidence we ask you to examine him." And though I revolted at the idea, they were so insistent on

my giving evidence, I examined the poor beggar, who was not only decapitated, but stabbed in about six places in the abdomen, hacked about, and cut in a frightful manner. As I walked home through the park about 6 a.m., I came upon my wretched sais, sitting handcuffed between two police. "Salaam sahib," he greeted me with his manacled hands to his brow; "Salaam, sahib," the cheery beggar continued, till I told him to drop it. I asked him if he had murdered Clems' sais and the man in the Bazaar. "Yes, sahib, both of them," he promptly answered, and seemed neither horrorstruck nor remorseful.

"Why did he do it?" I asked my raconteur. "Women," he replied, tersely, the old hideous excuse for misplaced passion. It appears a lovely little widow, with some property and beloved by Clems' sais, lived with her elder married sister and her husband in the Bazaar. Abdul wished to marry her, but the married sister, feeling he was not worthy, refused her sanction to Abdul and smiled on Clems' sais' suit.

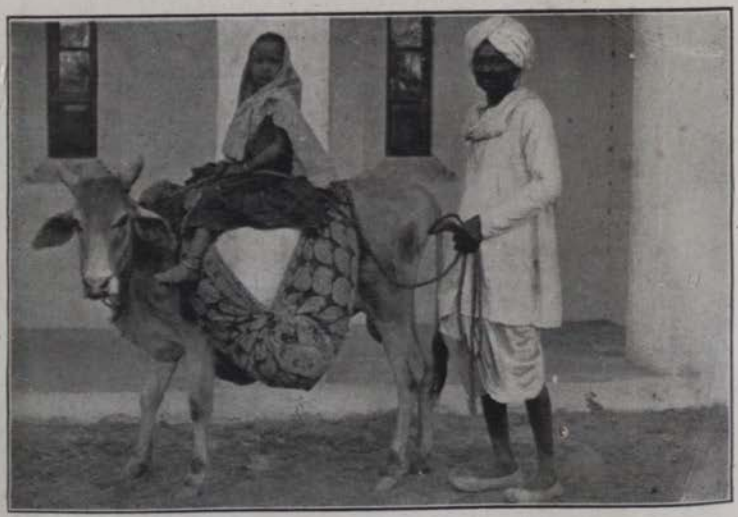
Abdul determined to rid the earth of all that stood between him and his houri, so calmly stabbed first his rival, then went to the house of his beloved to slay her sister; the brother-in-law heard him, however, and in attempting to eject him was stabbed, hacked, and finally slashed across the throat.

Trailing his bloody weapon, Abdul, exalted with blood letting, calmly went to a native tobacco shop, purchased some cigarettes, which he lit, and was smoking with calm enjoyment when the police came upon him.

"And the lovely widow?" I asked.

"Oh, she went away up country and married another man, I believe, and Abdul has appealed against the sentence of death, and I have to testify at his second trial on Monday."

Hindoos at Umballa.



The Dhobi Wala.

UMBALLA.

UMBALLA.

Dearest Bertha,

My first glimpse of cantonment life came in January at Umballa, where I arrived one cold night after a long journey. My cheesy host met me at the station, and drove me in a Tum Tum, as the buggy of the country is called, along a misty Mall to the corner of British Cavalry Road, where his bungalow was situated.

Soft-shaded lamps and firelight glinted on to the verandah. I got an impression of doric columns, palms, rosy English chintz, and hundreds of photos, as my lovely hostess, a vision in a geranium red tea gown, came to greet me.

It was all so cosy, so fresh, so clean after a series of up country hotels and trains, I felt I'd arrived at Heaven without the preliminary of dying. I had a dress rehearsal of that, however, before I left.

I had been told that Umballa was the jumping off spot of all India, nothing to do but ride out to polo and come back and talk about it. But who, remembering the long glorious rides, with eyes towards the hills of Simla, can say there is nothing to do; or see unmoved, on going through the native mud hut village, the rainbow of humans, and little naked brown babies, that if they did not smell of every kind of unclean thing, and peat smoke into the bargain, would be so adorable to cuddle.

All through India I had this desire, but having given way to it once, never dared to repeat the offence to my nose. They walk when no bigger than a six months' old European, although they are probably well over a year in age; seldom dressed beyond the red brahmin string round the waist, which sometimes supports a metal medallion, meant to hang in front, but seldom there.

The girls from the earliest hours have their baby noses burdened with rings, and I have seen babies of both sexes with several wooden pegs in the top of the cartilage of each ear, to keep open the holes pierced for future ornament.

Then the heads of many little Mohammedans as yet unturbaned, with close clipped or shaved off locks, save for the wisp left on the crown, by which they expect to be drawn up to Heaven.

Amicable women friends are squatting on the ground, and accommodating each other by a vigorous hunt for the source of annoyance that infests their heads. Nothing seems to be withheld; every detail of life is openly performed. They are as simple and direct as the animals in the fields we cantered through out to the grand trunk road, so pregnant in one's memory with Kipling's tale of little "Kim."

We pass the jail where chained prisoners are at work splitting wood; past a dairy farm in such proximity to stable filth that we shudder at the fumes, and all along the road trudge mothers with tiny babes sitting astride their hips. I only saw in all my thousands of miles of Indian travel, two babies borne in the arms as we carry them. From the earliest hour they are set astride the

mother's hip, and, later, on a man's shoulder when they have sense enough to hold on to his head.

Driving out one afternoon to the Club, where half Umballa assembles every day at five, my hostess murmured to the bearer that she would like him to get some roses for the house. "Yes, Ma'am," he replied; "later, when the mem sahibs all at the Club, I get you some." The delightful way the servants steal from each others gardens is most naive.

As a rule one goes to Paget Park, where a nursery of no mean order exists. One buys a book of pink tickets for a rupee and goes eight times for as many as one can cut and carry away. The head gardener, if there, limits one to a dozen roses, but he is seldom there.

In this tiny park is a pretty little temple, beside a small lake covered with Lotus blossom. The lake has the appearance of considerable depth. A story illustrating how little the East understands the West was told me of a young Englishman newly arrived in Umballa.

He was walking through Paget Park late one afternoon, when his attention was arrested by violent cries of distress, or for help, emanating from the temple, to which he rushed. Speaking no Hindoostani, he could not make out exactly what had happened, but from the frenzied gesticulation of the natives assembled there had no doubt that someone was to be rescued from the lake.

Pulling off his boots and coat, he dived into the supposed deep water and stuck, head and shoulders deep, in soft mud. Impotent to call for help in his predicament, he was watched a short time by the natives he had tried to succour, who, having no understanding of

his heroic action, finally walked off, leaving him unassisted, with murmurings of wonderment at "These mad English." He was taken from the lake some hours after quite dead. The natives had only been indulging in a little cheery conversation.

Two afternoons a week one can dance in the Umballa Club to a military band on an excellent floor, and the pastime presents a grotesque picture to one unused to dancers in rubber-soled tennis shoes, polo kit, and ladies in habits. A fair sprinkling of all of these are found amongst those who take the floor. On other afternoons silent tea parties assemble in the dim corners of the ballroom and converse in the hushed tones that are always used in criticising the other guests.

One dines out frequently, and returns hospitality as often. This does not entail great expense, as food is cheap, and an excellent dinner can be provided for one rupee a head in a town where quails are 1/4 a dozen, and 1/6 buys a pair of chickens. How the Indian cook can send up the dinners he does—good, bad, or indifferent, having prepared them over a clay stove, with perhaps at most a half dozen holes in it filled with charcoal; nowhere to bake or to roast, as an English cook understands the process, and only the most primitive culinary implements to work with—is a mystery of the East I never solved.

There are five available polo grounds on the Maidan, and had it not rained with a dispiriting frequency we might have witnessed more than one practice game, which, alas! was all I saw, for on the first fine day after my arrival we had arranged to go to golf, and were on the way in the Tum Tum when the shaft broke, and, slam-

ming on the horse, frightened him into a bolt. Half a mile down the road a tree growing out of a ditch exercised such a fatal fascination for the beast that he went straight at it. The tree tore off the hood of the buggy, broke the other shaft, liberating the horse, and deposited my hostess on the road and me twenty feet away in the ditch.

Despite the rain, the earth of Umballa was of the nature of the hard, hard world of reality and woe, especially when I unpremeditatingly tried to shove my face into it.

Bruised and bleeding, I was driven home and put to bed, whilst my stunned hostess with positive heroism wrote a note summoning the K.D.G. Surgeon, who prescribed rest in a darkened room for at least a week, as I was suffering with slight concussion.

Next day a nose of terrific proportion, a chin gashed open for several inches, and as disreputable a black eye as it is possible to have, quite closed up and utterly disfiguring, made it easy for me to obey the doctor's orders; and until the day before I left, I stuck to the seclusion of the bungalow.

On my first Sunday in Umballa I went to the Cathedral, and watched with pleasure the choir of Tommies, and revelled after the service, in the march off of several regiments and bands, and felt life in a military cantonment was a cheery thing.

But when one lies ill, depressed by rain without and the pain within, the incessant trumpeting, that is so emphatic a feature of military station life, gets on one's nerves to such an extent one wishes the martial blast had never been heard.

The day before I left Umballa, I painted the black eye out of sight, and went forth in the afternoon to General Pilcher's garden party.

This cheery entertainment filled me with delight, as I saw on my arrival amongst the dozen or more conjurors provided to entertain us, one who had come to do the snake and mongoose act. I was doomed to be disappointed, for just as the conjuror placed his nasty big snake free on the grass and released the mongoose, a foreign lady visitor began to try and hypnotise the snake. The reptile did not respond, and the mongoose was just working up a show of opposition when the infuriated lady seized the snake firmly below the head, and refused to allow the trick to proceed.

I turned away to be cheered by a Hindoo fortune-teller, but as he spoke no English, I got a very garbled idea of my future, which, however, held the emphatic assertion that I would not cross water for six months; that is less than six weeks ago. I've been through the Arabian Sea, down the Indian Ocean, and approach the Pacific as I write, so my faith in the soothsayer of Umballa fades.

At this garden party a band discoursed all the latest comic opera music, which to me was quite wonderful, as at least six months elapse after a London success ere the music reaches Australia—the so-called Paradise of light opera.

In a sand paddock the General most kindly had his three new English thoroughbreds, for he dearly loves a horse, brought out for my inspection. As the playful gee-gees laid down and rolled in the muddy sand, I fear

the sais did not enjoy that part of the entertainment as much as the spectators.

In the evening, after a delightful dinner, we went to one of the fortnightly Club dances, which, as it was taboo, I thoroughly enjoyed.

A terrific electrical storm raged all night, and was Brocken-like in effect as we drove home at 2 a.m. Next morning the rain again descended, but it was essential for me to have money, so I sallied forth to the Bank, and on my return I was rewarded by the sight of a native wedding procession.

Ten elephants, with jangling bells, burdened with relatives of the espousing parties and dozens of retainers in white, were making a terrific racket; then many gaily-dressed natives, and finally the youthful bridegroom being led on a pony, sitting up in splendid raiment, aged, I should think, at most about six years.

At night I drove down the Mall regretfully to the Station, leaving the toy-like town behind, with its rectangular streets and pretty bungalows. I felt it had possibilities my untimely accident had prevented me forever from proving. Since then I have met some of the kind people who entertained me there, and though I shall probably never return, I shall look forward always with great happiness to meeting once more my friends of a pleasant hour.

LUCKNOW.

COMMISSIONER'S HOUSE,
LUCKNOW.

Dear, dear Mrs. Ashbridge,—

How much, how often, I have thought of you in Lucknow. It's been a week of such cheery pleasure. I arrived here the day before my birthday, after a night journey from Umballa.

I was so excited at the thought of seeing all these nice people again, I could not sleep. Every time the train stopped I looked out at the shadows of people in great throngs huddled in clusters all about the station, for when the native wants to travel he packs up and goes to the station, where he waits sometimes a day and a night for the train.

Time, it is said, was made for slaves. Certainly in India the native acts as though he possessed an eternity of it. The irritating thing is he frequently behaves in his business relations with one, as though we possessed a lifetime of loose hours, only to be tied together by a tape of death; that is their only boundary line, and it never throws the least shadow of hurry into their lives.

Iron cups, flaming with light from the burning oil they contain, were held aloft on a yard-high iron rod by men whose jaws are invariably tied up as though the owners were suffering with mumps, and with huge quilted wraps swathed about their shoulders, whilst thin, bare legs go uncovered below.

It is a nation absolutely lacking in a sense of proportion; therein lies its charm. Away from it, the irritating noises, the wrangling voices fade from memory, and one forgets the terrible throat-clearing that begins at dawn and greets one's ears at every station till breakfast, giving the impression that physical India is one huge cough of Augean stable quality.

But from the rainy Punjab to sunny Central Provinces was a delightful change. I felt ten years younger. Joy, even in anticipation, is the greatest rejuvenator.

I went first to the Hotel I'd stayed at two months ago, and was given nice rooms, as I only wanted them for the week end. Every inch of space had been engaged weeks ahead for the Civil Service Cup week, to which I'd been asked to stay with the cheeriest, dearest people imaginable.

After getting nicely unpacked, I was met with the annoying information that the Maharajah of Jodpore, who had engaged these rooms for next week, had elected to arrive that afternoon, and I would kindly go into some horrid little rooms in another wing.

It is useless to protest in India, but lots of people do. I heard one Mem-sahib from Simla, who was treated in a similar manner, peevishly complain of the lack of deference due to a lady of her position, the absence of consideration shown to one of her husband's rank, etc. It had no effect on the proprietor, since she was not prepared to pay more than the incoming black potentate for the rooms she desired.

Since my rooms were not pleasant, I rushed into the sunshine, seeing all the familiar street scenes—the sidewalk barber, the fruit vendors, the metal workers, all

the dear, bright blotches of color in their dingy frames of dirt—a dirt one does not sense acutely. The hideous fakir even gave a touch of dreamlike unreality, and a comprehensive, sweeping view of the Husainabad Imambarah and tank, though only built by Muhammed Ali Shah between 1837-1842, gave me a satisfactory sense of the East as a land of magnificence.

I drove about dropping cards in the little tin boxes, and wrote my name in the various books of those in command. After lunching with the Railston family, who have two nice sons out here—the one known as "Admiral" is one of the best polo players in the Rifle Brigade team —we went to the horse show, which had been going on all day.

The most attractive feature was Miss Biddy Barrett, about five years old, her lovely little face, crowned with golden curls and framed in a topee, sitting astride her pony in Jodpore breeches, a tweed coat, turnover collar on her tiny shirt, and tie fastened across with a miniature gold safety pin. She took second prize. Had I been judging, she'd have had first. A more adorable thing in baby equestriennes I've never seen.

In the evening I chaperoned Miss Clova Railston, who had made a charming picture on her brother's horses all the afternoon, to the dance at Mahommed Bagh Club, and danced up to Sunday with no compunction. It was delightful renewing my acquaintances in Lucknow, for I had my first dance and polo here last November.

On Sunday afternoon I went to tea at Lady Violet Crawley's bungalow. People were playing tennis, and I met such an attractive woman—a Mrs. Jack Fagan—who rides superbly, plays polo and pig-sticks astride,

and off a horse looks like an apple blossom—so sweet, so gentle and expressive is she of the best in the elements.

Monday I came here. My hostess has the capacity to pretend she hardly knows how many people are her guests, but sees that each and every one has all his pet comforts, and everyone is allowed to feel as unrestrained as in a hotel. My host, Mr. Saunders, the Commissioner, is one of the wittiest men I've met in India, and delightful Capt. Winter, whom I met in Pindi, is also here; a deputy commissioner, called Joplin, so interesting and quiet; two brothers called Faunthorpe, who shoot tigers as nonchalantly as one claps a mosquito to death; Mr. Archie Tod, of the Rifle Brigade, who is here for the polo, and odd sundry other men—ten in all, and only four women!

The bungalow has only a few big rooms, and the women are all put up in the house, but the men have delightful tents in the compound. This is really comfortable when it is not too cold, as one's native servant sees that one gets all one's usual comforts.

All day we sat at polo, and after a cheery dinner, some of the party went to a little entertainment for the Crown Prince at Government House, at which the guest of honor seemed bored.

Tuesday I got up very early, enveloped myself in furs, and went in the motor with Mr. Marshall, a racing box wallah, and Capt. Winter, to the racecourse to see morning gallops. This is a delightful pastime. The grass was wet with dew, the sky pink with the blush of coming sunlight, the cheep of birds flitting here, there, everywhere... The caw caw of the irrepressible crow, which exists in millions in this land of sorrow and laughter;

be assured, however, the laughter comes last. I'm not trying to be cryptic; one could not amongst all this splendid, cheery, open-hearted existence.

Mrs. Barrett and Miss "Billy" Miles were knocking polo balls about, other women riding around, and everyone interested and happy. Owners getting weights and figuring out chances of winning, and the sun slowly rising. When he got over the horizon we adjourned to the shelter of a shed at the back of the course, where coffee, brown bread and butter, and toast, and salt is served at little tables, and the riders dismount and congregate in little parties. At a quarter to nine we returned to the house to bathe and dress for breakfast.

Our host announced, as we were busy with the numerous courses an Indian breakfast always contains, that a Servian Count, who was bicycling from Calcutta to Belgrade, had been invited to lunch that day. As he speaks little English, I was asked to sit on one side and talk French to him, which he knows better than English, and Capt. Winter on the other side, to speak Russian, which the Count speaks better than either.

Some of the party objected to him because he was reported to wear golf trousers and stockings, a white sweater covered on the chest with medals, and a pink satin pill-box hat worked in gold.

I confess the idea amused me, and I made an excuse to be on the front verandah to see him arrive. He came up on his bicycle with great dash, holding a riding whip in his hand. That was my first laugh at his expense—not the last by any means.

He carried under his arm an autograph book containing the names of all the notable people he had met, and

never let the book out of his sight or reach for a second. We always had two tables at lunch and dinner, and most of those of the house party who were lunching in, preferred to sit at the other table.

We progressed merrily. The Count's deportment was original, to say the least, and his twisted sentences in English, which he insisted on speaking, were mirth provoking. When he saw my hostess and me drinking claret, he blandly asked, "Is that wine?". He had asked for beer. On being told that it was, he announced, "No good womens drinks wine in my country." A murmur from the other table reached my ears of "Kick the bounder out." It was a low growl, and came, I think, from nice Archie Tod.

The little Count, however, did not seem to sense anything unusual in his remark. His little bullet head, with hair cut very close, nodded like a little perky bird. His eyes smiled, and he toasted everybody in turn, and the health and prosperity of the house, and having heard that a huge fete was to be given that night by the Talukdars, as the rich natives are called, said he intended to be present, and regretted that he had sent his handsome velvet suit, "smoker suit," worked in gold, on to Delhi.

Apart from his gaudy attire he had no luggage or clothes other than he wore. A beautifully simple way to travel. He preceded our carriages to the races, and when we arrived he was strutting up and down lashing his trouser leg with his whip; a dog from savage Europe every inch. A troubled air pervaded the dinner party that night at Commissioner's house. Chits came from Government House, chits were hastily written and sent

back, more chits came, and dinner was punctuated with telephone calls, till our suspense was relieved by the announcement that the Crown Prince of Germany was lost. He had started with his chauffeur to motor about 3 p.m., when all Government House party were at the races, and at 8.30 had not returned. The unpleasant task of breaking this disappointing news to the Talukdars devolved upon my host. The Lieutenant-Governor and party, however, announced their intention of being present.

As we approached the Palace wherein the Talukdars proposed to receive their exalted guest the place was like a fairy scene. The arches and windows of all buildings were outlined with tiny lights, an endless labor, since neither electricity or gas is laid on in Lucknow. We drove up with a fine flourish, and descended on the red carpet on which anxious and wondering Talukdars stood to receive. I did not envy Mr. Saunders' mission, and we sensed some of his regret. It had all been so generously, so splendidly planned. A wide balcony was carpeted and arranged with chairs around the Vice-Regal enclosure, that all guests might see the splendid fireworks, the native fete always has as its most prominent feature. Inside the Palace a dais was arranged, and an archway on either side led to a room where a sumptuous champagne supper was spread.

People who had not heard of the Prince's disaster came crushing in, anxiously looking for His Highness. Failing to locate him, they looked for the Lieutenant-Governor, and being unrewarded in the search for notabilities sought with equal anxiety the supper, which partially consoled them. His Excellency, the Lieutenant-

Governor, arrived in due time, when the rumour of the Crown Prince's breakdown at Fatepur, and his telegraphed regrets at being unable to arrive in time for the fete, was whispered all over the room, and the fireworks display proceeded.

At its conclusion, I went in for a sandwich, and while Mr. Joplin was attending to my wants, the Servian Count appeared, dressed exactly as at lunch, but, in addition, a huge red ribbon hung round his neck, supporting a medal, the badge of "The Welcome Club, Allahabad."

The moment he caught sight of me he came up, bowed, and kissed my hand, and seizing a huge bunch of roses from a silver bowl on the supper table, bowed profoundly, and presented them.

Then, with equal rapidity he filled himself a glass of champagne, and saying loudly, "I drink to the beautiful Australian Queen," he drained the bumper. During this feat we escaped. The reception-room was brilliant with English uniformed officers and natives in fancy raiment. The interior decorations reminded me of an old-fashioned French Hotel, and whilst I was gazing about, a charming General and his A.D.C. told me our house party had gone, and they were deputed to take me to supper at the Chuttar Munzil Club, and then home.

Captain Winter from the house party was with us, and as we left, the sadly-disappointed hosts hung the native garlands fashioned of gold and silver tape, interspersed with silver discs heavily gold embroidered about our necks The cool night air was delightfully refreshing as we rushed through it to the Club, which we found, had more than one eye closed, and the cooks asleep. When I met Captain Winter in Rawal Pindi I was given a

catalogued list of his many attainments, the last being that he was a splendid cook, and in this as in all other items, I had heard he excelled his recommendation a thousand fold.

Rushing to the kitchen, he took off his coat, aroused the servants, and in an incredibly short time came to the table, and calmly helped us eat the delicious omelette he had made, and an excellent dish of cod roes *a la diable*—eggs and a tin of roe being all the kitchen could supply at that hour.

It was piercing cold when we went out. The General insisted on my taking his coat, his A.D.C. insisted on covering his chief with his, and then the General insisted on the A.D.C. sitting on the floor at our feet out of the draught, whilst our cordon bleu shivered between us.

The next evening I went to the ball given to the Crown Prince at this Club. It was changed incredibly. All day my dear hostess had worked directing the decorations. The ballroom, which is quite Hindoo in character, was beautiful with gold elephant trappings across the stage in front of the band. The whole of the terrace on the river side was tented in and arranged as a drawing-room, heated with tiny oil stoves, which made the Kala Juggas comfy places for the inevitable rose-leaf conversations of those who sit out.

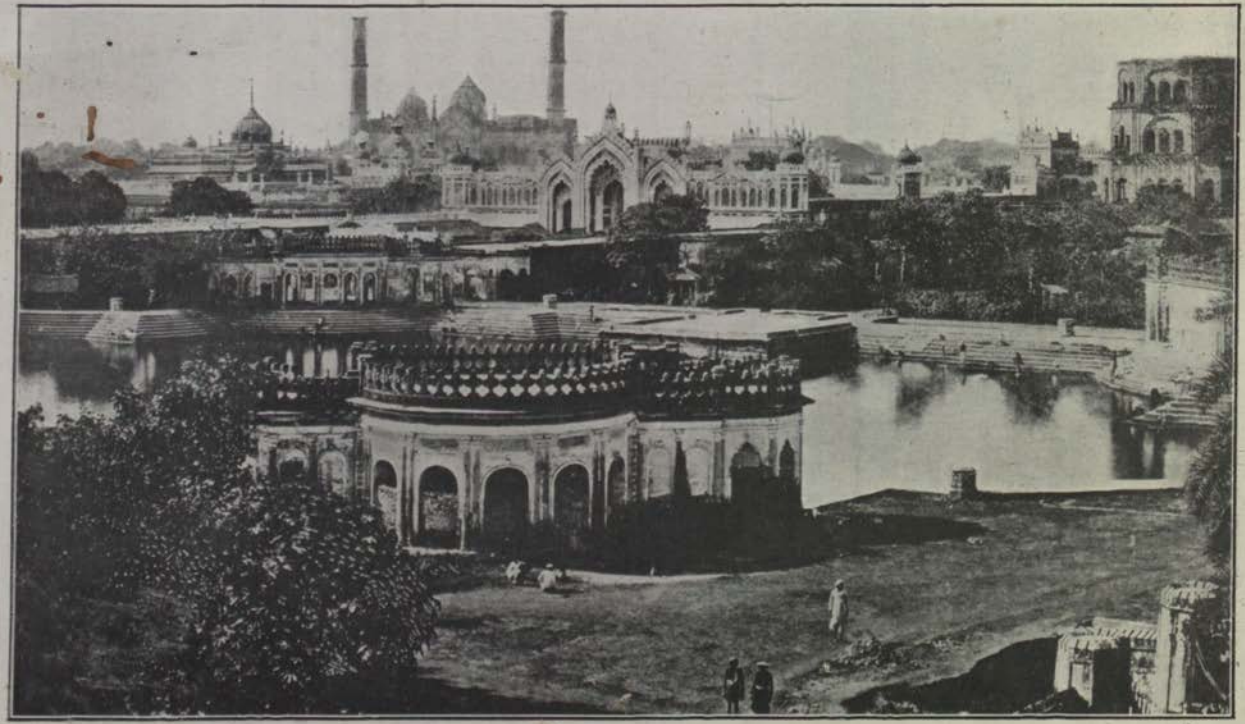
Soon after my arrival, a wondrous figure wended its way through the dense crowd. I could not place it at first, then it dawned on Captain Winter, who was beside me, who it was, and we laughed convulsively. In a ready-made waiter's evening dress, tan boots, bare hands, a crush hat under his arms, and the "Welcome Club, of Allahabad" medal on its wide red ribbon dangling over his heart, was the Servian Count.

"Would Madam honor him with a dance," he wondered in Russian to Captain Winter, who saved me with ready wit from such an infliction. He then said to me in English, "I had wished to take the dance with you, but the music it to my blood makes the boil, and I get so excite I know not what I do; perhaps it is as good Madam has not for me the dance to give."

Later, he met the Commissioner, who is sure the gallant bicyclist came uninvited. "See my clotes," he exclaimed, with pleasure, "I gets him from the tailor, but to-morrow I not keep him, just for this ball. It is a very fine fete. Many lovely ladies, but that Australian, she is the best," so you see I had one poor little conquest.

The Crown Prince sent for me a little after his arrival, and we danced. He then suggested that we might find a Kala Jugga, but all seemed occupied. "It is so very crowded. If we could only find a single chair," he plaintively complained. I told him it would be nicer to find two chairs, as I had abandoned my intention to write a book called "Knees I have sat on." We sat out a dance. We danced the next, sat out the fourth, and then he went home, leaving me to placate my angry neglected partners, who had to stand aside for Royalty.

They were such very nice partners, too. I ate supper in a chastened mood. I'd been accused of trying to amuse His Highness. Told if I'd been dull he would have quickly released me, but who in the wide world would risk being dull even to escape a Prince for one's most particular pet partner? and he does dance divinely. When the music stops, he doesn't let go of your right hand and leave you to extricate yourself as Englishmen do, from his encircling arm. He quickly withdraws his



My last glimpse of Native Lucknow.

arm from your waist, holds your hand for the fraction of a second till you have got over the sway from the rhythm of the dance, bows abruptly and releases your hand. It's quite the nicest bit of deportment I've met in any ballroom.

The next day, Thursday, was Cup Day, and the grand-stand at the races was crowded. H.R.H. the Crown Prince was present, but left during the afternoon for Calcutta, and in the evening we drove out to the 8th Hussars' circus to see Billy Waite, of Australia, do his famous buckjumping exhibition. Dozens of "Tommies" gallantly tried to sit the beasty, but one and all met with ignominious defeat.

Friday, the regular item of all Indian weeks, the fancy dress ball, came off in the Chuttar Munzil Club, Mrs. Alex. Watson bearing off the prize in her beautiful Marsovian dress. In India there is less self consciousness than anywhere else about making oneself beautiful, or ridiculous, by ancient or fantastic garb, and it materially helps the gaiety of a race week.

Saturday was the last day of the races. I went to lunch at Flagstaff House, and motored out with the General, but a spirit of sadness pervaded that scene, and the attendance was materially decreased by the departure of many visitors. The 16th Cavalry and Staff and Departments were "At Home." We sipped their tea in a weary fashion to the strains of the Highland Light Infantry Band, the sun set, and the Civil Service week was over.

Sunday morning I bargained on the verandah with a dealer in native pictures. He began asking Rs. 300, and finally took Rs. 65 for one, but on the ones at

Rs. 15, he would not come down one pie. Shopping is really most wearying on this system. Mrs. Saunders went hunting, and came home with a badly-sprained arm, as her horse fell with her. She was so plucky; she is really an exceptional woman. You'd find her most interesting.

I drove one of the departing men to the station, and dropped another silken tie. Oh! those charming friends of an hour. Why is life such a kaleidoscope?

Monday, as an aftermath, I went to the Military Dairy Farm, where I watched the point to point races from the roof. It was such fun. Over the four-mile course they scampered all the dear people one knew, with Captain Barrett weighing them in, in impromptu scales before each event. Dear frivolous Lucknow! So serious in your pleasure-taking pastimes, how I love you.

The house party has dissolved. I alone am left, and so happy to have these hours for better understanding of my clever charming host and hostess.

The eve of my departure has come. After an afternoon of tennis, General Mahon motored me to the Residency. The day was over, the Tower locked, but he is Burra Sahib, and it was quickly opened for him, and we climbed up silently and looked at the beautiful view—the river winding like a silver scarf, the wealth of trees about the velvety lawns, the suffused glow of sundown on the crumbling stone; it was a fine poem in silence, and, above all, the British Flag afloat.

THE KEYSTONE PRINTING CO., ROYAL LANE, MELBOURNE

00085966

Digitized with financial assistance from
Mr. K.M. Kothari
on 25 February, 2019